

A
Playwright's Adventures.

BY

FREDERICK REYNOLDS.



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1831

TO
THOSE POWERFUL PERSONAGES,
WHO CAN AT ONCE MAKE OR MAR AN AUTHOR'S HOPES,
THE CONDUCTORS OF THE PRESS,

I DEDICATE
The Dramatic Annual,
SIMPLY HOPING
THAT THIS LITTLE WORK MAY NOT BE DEEMED WHOLLY
UNWORTHY OF THEIR NOTICE.

SHOULD THEY ALLOW
THAT IT POSSESSES SOME REDEEMING QUALITIES,
PROBABLY THEY WILL
CRITICISE IT INDULGENTLY.
BUT AT ANY RATE I ENTREAT THEM TO
CRITICISE IT,
AND
NOT SUFFER IT TO DIE IN OBSCURITY.

FRED. REYNOLDS.

The Engravings on Wood designed and executed by
W. H. BROOKE.

CHAPTER I.

A comedy presented to a manager—Sea breezes and other seaside delights—The king of a fashionable watering-place—Private singing—Incipient love—A medical distinction without a difference—A manager's answer and a dramatist's reflections.

HENRY VIVIN, the son of a physician residing near Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, was educated at Rugby School. On leaving it he was immediately entered in the Middle Temple, and placed in the office of an experienced special pleader; but whether perceiving the *certain* uncertainty of his ever rising in this over-stocked profession, or disliking to study books which contained (to him) a language far less comprehensible than Greek or Hebrew, he suddenly aspired to the hope of becoming another Congreve. Following the example of that celebrated writer, he threw aside his Blackstone and Coke, and instead of civil or criminal laws, commenced so ardently the study of dramatic laws, that in a few months he set about “laying (to use his own expression) the first stone of a new comedy.” In vain did his special-pleading instructor frequently call at his chambers and remind him of

Otway, Savage, and others, who had become the victims of those very syrens who were now luring him from a reputable and profitable pursuit only to strand him amongst inevitable rocks and quicksands.

In vain also did other well-wishers point out the various difficulties attendant on dramatic composition. In vain did they remind him that his *first* difficulty consisted in pleasing *Himself*—his *second* difficulty in pleasing the *Manager*—his *third*, in pleasing the *Actors*—his *fourth*, in pleasing the *Licensor*—his *fifth*, in pleasing the *Audience*—his *sixth*, in pleasing the *Newspapers*: and, in addition to all these, the actors must *please* not to be taken ill, the weather must *please* not to be unfavourable, the opposing theatre must *please* not to put up strong bills; and then!—what then?—why then—“*Please* to pay the bearer the small sum of * * *;” and, N. B. which sum is sometimes, *par accident*, not paid at all*.

“Ay; but,” replied Vivid, “there are advantages, far above pecuniary ones, resulting from the success of an original comedy—the fame, the fashion, the pride of being counted as a first-rate wit—advantages almost unknown to poor briefless barristers.”

Thus he argued; and being unlike that race of selfish individuals who are constantly asking, other

In naming the above difficulties, I allude to an original comedy in five acts, not light translations from the French.—Vide preface to a play called “*Begone, dull Care.*”

people's advice, and as constantly following their own, Vivid always avoided troubling anybody relative to his private affairs, and consequently deemed it rather officious in those who intruded on him an opinion which he had never solicited, and an opinion which (as may be supposed) he instantly rejected. In fact, the die was cast, *aut poeta dramaticus aut nullus* was his motto, and he proceeded gradually towards the completion of his comedy.

After six months of hard and incessant labour, he finished (as he thought) an original five-act play; and shortly afterwards, through the interest of his affectionate father (who was extremely intimate with one of the manager's particular friends), a warm letter of recommendation was procured, which our author, having folded up with the manuscript, left *in propria persona* at the theatre, at the same time requesting (per note) that the answer might be forwarded to him at Dr. Vivid's, near Ryde; for which place, elated with the hope of acquiring future fame and fortune, he started that evening in the Portsmouth mail.

Vivid was at this time about twenty-one years of age, and was rendered interesting, not only from his prepossessing personal recommendations, but from his peculiarly unsophisticated manners. Yet, notwithstanding he resided the half of each year in London, he had passed so much time in the special pleader's and in his own chambers, that he was as "new to the world" as

a young heiress not yet prepared for that most important event of her life, "the coming out."

Early in the morning he arrived at the villa of the doctor, who, though he boasted not of having a sufficient income (either from patrimony or practice) to enable him to keep up a large establishment, yet few country gentlemen could compete with him in giving his friends a hearty, hospitable welcome: the truth is, he might fairly have doubled his practice had he displayed to his patients less candour and bluntness.

On one occasion, a popular author (then passing the summer at Ryde) sent for him, and amongst other questions anxiously asked him the following—"Pray, sir, do you not think I write too much for my constitution?" "No," replied the doctor; "but you do for your reputation."

On another occasion, when sent for by a hypochondriacal artist, who had, or fancied he had, a cancer in his nose, the doctor was so teased and worn with the multiplicity of his irrelevant queries, that at last he impatiently cried out—"What, what did you say your profession was?"

"A drawing-master," was the reply.

"Very well, then," rejoined the doctor; "go home and make a drawing of your nose, for you won't see it after Monday."

Such was this medical "old Kent," and such the result of his *downright* style, that scarcely a single in-

valid would have consulted him, but for the conviction that he was only thus rude to the "*malade imaginaire*;" and that when a *real* case of illness called forth all his *real* talent, he came at least to comfort, if not to cure.

Ryde, at this period, was overflowing with visitors. The members of the Yacht Club at Cowes had commenced their operations; and that adorer of salt-water excursions, that amphibious animal Johnny Bull—half flesh, half fish—and who, with all due respect, is a sort of great *sea-calf*, had commenced his annual migrations to the sea-side.

The metropolis suddenly became deserted: for what smoke-dried inhabitant that could scrape together a few pounds would not inhale his "darling sea breezes?" Magical marine panacea! which causing John *instanter* to believe that the first puff has given him a new and glorious appetite, he begins and pursues so tremendous a system of gormandizing, that he becomes actually *sea-sick on shore*; then, to recover himself, and avoid the heat of the sun which renders the *green monster* more unendurable, he saunters to the library, where each person looks at his neighbour as if he thought the other wanted to borrow a sovereign. Then in the evening he lounges in the library *encore*, for it is now, alas! (except a small starless company of comedians) the only place of amusement; and thence returning to his comfortless lodgings, completely overcome with

dole and enmity, he, marigold-like, “goes to bed with the sun, and rises weeping.”

Formerly watering-places were kept alive by a constant round of dancing, raffling, and love-making; but now-a-days, alas! it appears that *Cupid is dead*; or, at any rate, that he has become an *inland sojourner*. However, whether in consequence of his flight, or of the superior attraction of the continent, or of the blind idolaters at length discovering that their “darling sea” can neither set broken limbs, nor operate like the fountain which changes age and decrepitude into youth and beauty, the marine mania is rather diminishing than increasing; and probably it would subside altogether, if, amongst other reasons, Englishmen would remember that Switzerland is deemed the most healthy part of Europe chiefly because it is too far from the *green monster* for the health of the inhabitants to be affected by its muddy and nauseous exhalations*.

The King of Ryde (for all these places have resident sovereigns) was the Earl of Carisbrook, whose princely mansion, park, and gardens would have rendered the day too short for his happiness, but for those two drawbacks, advanced age and acute gout. Still, however, during the intervals of the complaint,

* Brighton, it must be confessed, is always free from these exhalations: besides, in the autumn, Brighton has another advantage, particularly for low-spirited visitors; since there they do not witness the *fall of the leaf*.

he was enabled to pursue his favourite hobby, that of sailing in his yacht, with all the ardour of a schoolboy.

His lordship's family consisted of an only child, Lady Henrietta, in her twentieth year; her governess, Mrs. Sternly, an old *bas bœuf*; the honourable Mrs. Almack, a first cousin of Lord Carisbrook, and an antiquated *exclusive*; her daughter, Miss Almack; two visitors—Captain Morden, R. N. and C. B., and Count Montnoir, a French nobleman, and nephew of the Marquis of Calatra. Lady Henrietta, like another Eloisa, was "formed in a prodigality of nature;" her beauty was literally of so transcendent a character, that, when she appeared at any of the numerous places of fashionable resort, the admiration of one sex could only be exceeded by the envy of the other. Her mental accomplishments were likewise of a superior order; for Mrs. Sternly, though often perhaps too rigid and too irritable, had taken care that those talents which her fascinating pupil had naturally inherited should be considerably improved and cultivated by art. In short, we might almost be romantic enough to say of her what General Burgoyne said of his heroine*, or Rousseau† of his, before the general, or what Ariosto‡ said before either—

" Nature broke the mould when she was finished."

* *The Heiress.*

† *La nouvelle Héloïse.*

‡ *Orlando Furioso*.—" *Natura lo fece e poi ruppe la stampa.*"

Then again, being completely well read and well bred (two qualifications sometimes rare in fashionable life), Lady Henrietta's superiority over her youthful competitors was not more upheld by personal than by intellectual charms.

Lord Carisbrook was a man of very eccentric habits and feelings; and therefore, unlike commonplace, worldly fathers, he disdained to sacrifice his daughter at the shrine of rank and fortune, justly arguing that she already possessed enough of both. Where then, from what class of society, was to be selected the honourable possessor of this unrivalled prize? Why, strange to say, having, before he unexpectedly came into the title (owing to the deaths of his elder brother and uncle), ranked as post-captain in the navy, and seen much actual service, he imbibed such a love of naval character and naval reputation, that, being unable himself to serve any longer, and having no son to supply his place, he determined to look out for a son-in-law who had upheld and would still uphold the glory of "old England's wooden walls."

Lady Henrietta had naturally other views and other feelings; but such was her sense of filial duty, and so sincere, nay almost unbounded, was her filial love, that her father's wishes were complied with the instant he expressed them, and the happy "intended" proved to be no other than one of the visitors then at Carisbrook Hall, Captain Morden; to say of whom that he was

a brave and a victorious commander was literally to say nothing; but to describe him as a most urbane and humane officer was to pay him the real compliment he deserved. Still, as he was double the age of his "hetrothed," and she took no interest in nautical affairs, they were in reality more "joined than matched."

Count Montnoir, who was desperately, but secretly, in love with our heroine (for he feared that an avowal might prevent his being deemed any longer a welcome visiter), could scarcely refrain from openly expressing his indignation at this extraordinary selection. However, as, in his own opinion, he far surpassed his *marine* rival in mental and personal accomplishments, and as he felt that Lord Carisbrook could not object to him on the score of religion, since though born in France he was a Protestant, this facetious foreigner, so far from despairing, considered the battle as by no means half over. As to poor Lady Henrietta, who also

"Never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek,"

she was indeed deeply to be pitied; for with whom could she communicate? and from whom could she expect sympathy? The object of her choice was as much a stranger to this unrevealed and unfortunate

attachment (unfortunate since he had neither rank, money, nor even the naval profession to recommend him) as were all her friends and relatives.

For many years, if Lord Carisbrook or any of his guests needed medical advice, Dr. Vivid was sent for; and when occasionally he was invited to a family dinner, his son sometimes accompanied him. One afternoon, Lady Henrietta being at the time about eight years old, and young Vivid about ten, he found her alone in the parlour sobbing violently. It appeared that, in the absence of her governess, she had just broken a valuable old china jar, the property of this cross old lady; and being previously somewhat in disgrace, the little trembler could scarcely support herself.

Suddenly the door opened, and in stalked the dreaded Mrs. Sternly. Casting her fiery eyes around, and perceiving some of the fractured pieces, she advanced in a paroxysm of passion towards Henrietta, when our little hero, in an attitude of humiliation, and in a tone of contrition, asserted that he was the culprit. Then entreating forgiveness, and adding that he was sure his father would immediately replace the loss, he respectfully shook hands with Henrietta, and, fearing she was about to acquit him, by inculpating herself, he gave her a significant and imploring look, and abruptly hurried out of the room.

The governess, having no doubt that Dr. Vivid

would replace the loss, soon became softened and satisfied; and as to her pupil, she was so gratified with Vivid's generous conduct, that probably this little incident was the unconscious cause of her concealed but lasting love. On our hero's boylike mind, however, it made not the slightest impression; nor did he in the remotest degree aspire to the supposition that he had on this or on any other occasion created an interest in one so much his superior.



Owing to Lord Garishbrook's patronage and his own well-earned reputation, Captain Morden had been ap-

pointed to the command of the "*Protector*," a forty-gun frigate lately launched at Portsmouth, and then lying off Spithead. On its being manned, stored, and provisioned, the captain, in order to celebrate the completion of this first "note of preparation," gave on board a public breakfast, at which nothing particular occurred, except that the over-hospitable donor, Jack Tar-like, having invited so many more persons than the ship could possibly hold, dozens were seen, wet and hungry, rowing back to the "place from whence they came." Those on board too, were equally disappointed; for though the Gunter of Portsmouth had received orders to provide a most sumptuous and abundantly supplied *déjeûné à la fourchette*, yet such was the crowd and confusion, that not a soul was heard to exclaim, with Macbeth, "Hold! enough!"

On the contrary, the viands were so scarce, and, owing to a strong north-easterly gale, the appetites were so peculiarly whetted, that the smiles and curtsies of the proudest beauties in the island were prodigally bestowed on that chivalrous hero who could place before them some fragments of ham or chicken. By the by, that lover must have little foresight who, on these *open-air* occasions, does not win the heart of half a dozen beauties, by coming *privately* prepared with plenty of the true substantial wooing material. Then again, notwithstanding Captain Morden, in addition to a regular band, had engaged several excellent professional vocalists, "confusion worse confounded"

ITS EFFECTS.

arose from that cool, inveterate private singer—that bird that “*can’t sing but will sing*”—dauntless Mrs. Almack, who unblushingly persisting in taking the lead, squalled out so many of the airs in *Der Freischutz* and *Massaniello*, that at length (from this and other unlucky causes) the company, in the true Dogberry style, “humbly gave themselves leave to depart.” This terminated this party, like nine parties out of ten—those who were invited voting it a total failure, and those who were not invited, not only howling and ridiculing the host for his meanness and ostentation, but whispering that there should be an act of parliament to prevent such absurd nautical characters from ever coming on shore.

On the next morning, Count Montnoir, the most selfish of human beings (and who a few days before had boasted that though all his friends were extremely unwell, he never was *himself* in better health) fancying he had caught a cold at the naval *fête*, immediately called in Dr. Vivid—writing to him in his usual style, “I be not vell *myself aujourdhui*” The doctor obeyed the summons, and speedily ascertaining that it was a complete “*malade imaginaire*” case, he coolly asked the anxious count what he generally ate and drank at dinner.

“ Vy,” replied the count, “I do eat mostly a little *mouton roti*, and I drink vat you call half *un demi bouteille* of old madeira.”

"Bad," replied the doctor, shaking his head, "very bad."

"Ma foi! den vat am I to eat and drink?"

"Why, let me see (*feeling his pulse a second time*): you must give up the roast mutton and Madeira regimen, and take the same quantity of roast beef and old sherry."

Now this being decidedly "a distinction without a difference," the count stared and exclaimed,

"Begar! *venez-vous ici* to treat me like vun little baby?"

At this moment a servant entered and informed the doctor that Mrs. Almack was taken ill so suddenly as to require his immediate attendance.

The doctor bowed and hastily retired. The lady's complaint, he soon ascertained, had been caused by her vocal exertions on the previous day, when it appeared that she had so harmoniously overstrained herself as to have produced a slight spasmotic affection in the chest; and because the doctor prescribed no powerful medicine, but treated her case in the same light, salutary manner he had treated the count (and for which they ought both to have thanked him), these indignant patients combining, complained of his rude, unfeeling conduct to Lord Carisbrook; and, backed by the governess, who thought the doctor had never shown her sufficient respect, his lordship was soon persuaded to support their cause. First calling in another physician, he immediately wrote a civil note to Dr. Vivid, declining, for the future, the honour of that gentleman's

visits. Here was a blow to poor Lady Henrietta! She knew the son would never again pass the threshold of a house from which his father had been so unhandsomely excluded; and as the day of her marriage was rapidly and awfully approaching, she feared that this disastrous circumstance would prove the cause of their being separated for ever.

Lady Henrietta conjectured rightly in supposing that Henry Vivid would make his father's wrongs his own. Though he soon forgave the misled Lord Carisbrook, and of course did not in the slightest degree blame his daughter, yet he was so much incensed against Count Montnoir, that at first he thought of demanding an explanation; but the doctor's good advice soon induced him to relinquish so wild an idea. However, one day, in the public library, accidentally overhearing this French vaporer misrepresenting the case, and stating various untrue reasons for the doctor's being no longer called in at Carisbrook House, young Vivid fiercely advanced, and almost breasting him, exclaimed,

“Sir! in one word, your assertions are altogether false!”

“Eh! qu'est que c'est que ça?” rejoined the alarmed count.

“Confess!” continued our hero; “apologise before this company:—nay, mark me, if you do not this very moment——”

“Eh bien! arrêtez—doucement, et peut-être —oui—I be wrong—I rather forget myself.”

"Forget yourself!—you are right, then; for there is nothing on earth less worth remembering."

Notwithstanding this public and marked rebuke, the baffled count (voting the son of a country practitioner beneath a nobleman's notice) only shrugged up his shoulders, hummed "*Mulbrook*," and walked out of the library; whilst Vivid, who, though his ruling passion, love of play-writing, still reigned predominant, yet having proved he could still find room for the display of the purest filial feelings, returned home self-satisfied, but, as usual, all anxiety for the grand event, viz. the long but vainly expected answer from the manager.

On opening the door, the servant, anticipating the daily, nay, hourly question, at once told him that there was no letter.

"No!" replied Vivid. "Was ever poor fellow so tantalized? Yet, perhaps, after all, no news may really prove good news."

"But," added the servant, "there is a parcel, sir."

"A parcel! humph," rejoined Vivid: "not from London, I hope?"

"Yes, sir, from London, and here it is," taking it from a bracket in the passage.

Vivid, aware that this was the herald of bad tidings, and fully foreboding the fatal result, immediately tore open the packet, and down dropped the rejected comedy and the following explanatory letter from the manager:

" SIR,

" IN consequence of the warm recommendations of one of my oldest friends, I anticipated great pleasure from the perusal of your comedy; but I am sorry to be compelled to confess that I have been, on the whole, much disappointed. Certainly, some of the scenes are well written; but the play is altogether so totally devoid of what is called dramatic tact, that, fearing it would inevitably fail in representation, I am, most reluctantly, compelled to return it.

" If the ingenious yet evidently inexperienced author wishes to succeed as a dramatic writer, I would advise him to make character his study, and, consequently, to see more of 'folly as it flies' before he attempts to lash it. From chiefly residing (as I understand has been the case) in his own chambers, and those of his special pleader, his knowledge of the world has been necessarily so limited as to prevent his understanding the art of catching the manners living as they rise: let him, therefore, travel, and by mixing more in society I have little doubt that in no great length of time he will be enabled to write a comedy which I shall be happy to put immediately into rehearsal.

" I remain, sir,

" Your very obedient servant,

" CHARLES CANDIDE.

" —— *Theatre, August 10.*"

Vivid having read what appeared to him to consist of "a few of the unpleasitest words that ever blotted paper," was naturally at first extremely disappointed and annoyed; but on a second and a third perusal (for of course, lover-like, he couched it o'er and o'er), hope dawned again, and he exclaimed,

"He is right!—the kind, considerate manager is right. I have hitherto led too secluded a life. But, from this moment, I'll make up for lost time. Let others travel to see inanimate scenery—I travel to study animated nature: and, at the end of two years, show me what maker or writer of tours shall dare to compete with the *Dramatic Tourist*. But first I must consult my father; and with his consent and his aid, I, who in fact now make my exit like the 'wan woe-begone' *l'auteur sifflè*, shall, ere long, re-enter, strutting and smiling like the hale, prosperous *l'auteur applaudi*."



CHAPTER II.

•

A departure—A call-boy and a little brother manager—A wedding and an arrival—A long voyage and a sudden return.

Dr. Vivid having long despaired of his son's ever succeeding at the bar, and perceiving that his *ardor scribendi* had “increased, was increasing, and could not be diminished *,” naturally foresaw that any opposition on his part would prove totally fruitless, and therefore (though reluctantly) gave way to his usual indulgent feelings, and at once consented. The only remaining difficulty now was, how to raise the supplies; for the doctor's small income had been annually rendered “beautifully less” by that grand reducer, a chancery suit. However, he contrived to scrape together one hundred and fifty pounds; and with this sum it was settled that the enthusiastic dramatic tourist should start in a few days.

The rumour of his departure rapidly spread from gossip to gossip, and of course at length reached the ears of poor Lady Henrietta. The news was communicated at the breakfast-table by Captain Morden,

* Vide Dunning's memorable motion during Lord North's administration.

who candidly confessed that "he for one was extremely sorry to hear of it, for he was always very partial to the society of this interesting young man."

"And I am equally glad to hear of it," exclaimed Mrs. Almack; "and I hope he'll stay away these twenty years."

"Nay, then, madam," replied the captain, "your hope will not be gratified, for he means to be absent only two years."

"Only two years!" tremulously cried Henrietta.

"Pray, captain," said the governess sarcastically, "what has caused this *interesting* young man thus *cruelly* to forsake us?"

"Love, Mrs. Sternly—violent love."

"Love!" rejoined Lady Henrietta, almost breathless with agitation; "love! for whom?"

"Why, for more than one—for a set of ladies who, you know, bear no rival near their throne—the muses, Henrietta."

This partially restored our heroine; and breakfast at the same time luckily terminating, she retired to her own chamber, where, unperceived, she no longer struggled to control her grief.

A few days after this circumstance, when she and Miss Almack were taking an airing on horseback, the horse of the latter took fright and ran away. In vain did the alarmed rider attempt to govern the infuriated animal: in the middle of the hill (on which part of Ryde is situated), overcome with terror and fatigue,

she at length suffered the reins to escape from her feeble grasp, and fell senseless to the ground.—Raised and assisted by her afflicted friend and the servant, she was carried into the nearest house—a villa close to the spot—where she received every attention from the housekeeper and maid-servant, the only two persons then at home, but who immediately sent for their master.

In a few minutes he arrived, and Henrietta had the gratification of once more beholding Dr. Vivid. He was equally gratified; and having lost not a moment in ascertaining the exact state of the unfortunate young lady, he assured all around, that there not only did not appear the slightest danger, but that on his taking from her a small quantity of blood, he would answer for her recovery.

This proved to be the case: yet still continuing too unwell and too weak to be removed, the doctor (to prevent alarm at Carisbrook House) advised her sympathizing friend to return home, and communicate the news herself;—but he added, “No more accidents this day, if you please; and since I perceive your horse is in a very scared and wild state, I must entreat you not to think of riding.” She directly complied; and having ordered her servant to attend her, she was about to leave the house, when to her surprise, but secretly not her regret, Henry Vivid entered it. Having heard all the particulars from his father, he requested to be allowed the happiness of escorting Lady Henrietta. She hesitated; but not having the fortitude to refuse,

bashfully complied. As they walked away, after congratulating her on her friend's escape, and some of the usual observations about weather and watering places, his fair companion said, "So you are going abroad, Mr. Vivid."

"Yes, madam."

"And for two years!"

"I hope so, Lady Henrietta."

"What!" she rejoined, "for such a length of time do you *hope* to leave so many friends in a state of anxiety?"

"Oh! you mistake, madam—' I but fill up a place which may be better supplied;—for be assured, except to my father and two or three others, my absence will not prove the source of one moment's regret."

"Well, you are the best judge, Mr. Vivid: but as I shall now probably never"—here she paused—"never see you again, I take this opportunity of avowing that, so far from having joined in a conspiracy—and such I must call it—for the purpose of excluding your good father from a house where he deserved to be for ever welcomed, I cannot sufficiently express my contempt for Count Montnoir, and those who so meanly, unfeelingly, and ungratefully leagued with him."

"Indeed!—Oh, Lady Henrietta! these uncalled-for expressions of kindness and generosity towards the most liberal and affectionate of parents will never be obliterated from my memory; and may you and Captain Morden—for I know he is not my father's enemy—"

"Enemy! he is his friend—and yours;—and, may I add, his constant and undeviating esteem for both has by no means lessened him in my estimation."

Here Henrietta sighed and held down her head; but suddenly rallying, and abruptly turning the conversation, the real motive for this strange but brief alteration in her manner remained totally undiscovered by our hero.—"Stop, Mr. Vivid!" she exclaimed: "and look!—who is that gentleman advancing towards us from the pier?—Oh, I see—my cousin, Lord Orville:—he has just landed from his yacht."

These last words were scarcely uttered before his lordship joined them; when Lady Henrietta having introduced each to the other, the conversation became general, and continued so till they arrived at Lord Carisbrook's park-gate, when she took leave of both, and hastily and in great agitation entered the park; but after proceeding a few paces, she paused, and then turning round, like another Rosalind, she said, or seemed to say, "Did you call, sir?"—but receiving no answer, and pride, honour, and filial affection instantly coming to her aid, she darted from the beaten track, and soon reached her father's mansion; whilst Lord Orville and Vivid, having wished each other "good day," took different paths, without either of them having made to the other the slightest observation on the state of excitement in which their fair companion had thus left them.

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Here Henrietta sighed and held down her head; but suddenly rallying, and abruptly turning the conversation, the real motive for this strange but brief alteration in her manner remained totally undiscovered by our hero.—"Stop, Mr. Vivid!" she exclaimed: "and look!—who is that gentleman advancing towards us from the pier?—Oh, I see—my cousin, Lord Orville:—he has just landed from his yacht."

These last words were scarcely uttered before his lordship joined them; when Lady Henrietta having introduced each to the other, the conversation became general, and continued so till they arrived at Lord Carisbrook's park-gate, when she took leave of both, and hastily and in great agitation entered the park; but after proceeding a few paces, she paused, and then turning round, like another Rosalind, she said, or seemed to say, "Did you call, sir?"—but receiving no answer, and pride, honour, and filial affection instantly coming to her aid, she darted from the beaten track, and soon reached her father's mansion; whilst Lord Orville and Vivid, having wished each other "good day," took different paths, without either of them having made to the other the slightest observation on the state of excitement in which their fair companion had thus left them.

Vivid, however, felt, from this moment, towards her a new and extraordinary degree of interest ; and probably, but for the influence of the "ruling passion," the idea of not seeing her again for at least two years, and of their finding her married, *might* have created heart-burnings not easily to be subdued ;—but "the die was cast ;" and, on his return home, beholding the advanced state of the packing-up preparations, the present paramount object—his dramatic tour—soon gained the ascendancy, and, for a time at least, absorbed all other recollections ; but only for a time, as will be forthwith seen.

An early day was fixed for his departure ; and about a week before the important event took place the housekeeper informed him that a person who called himself Sam Altaet requested the honour of a few minutes' conversation. Vivid at first did not recollect the name ; but on being reminded by the bearer of the message that, when a boy, this Sam had occasionally been one of his playfellows (and had particularly won little Master Henry's heart by making him a present of a small theatre, entirely of his (Sam's) own construction), our hero, with a smile of satisfaction, exclaimed,

"Pray let me see him!—show in my old brother manager."

At the period alluded to, Sam Altaet was the call-boy and under property-man in the Ryde theatre, and

therefore was not only capable of building the aforesaid playhouse, but of furnishing it with scenery, machinery, decorations, and performers, i. e. certain *satellites* called puppets. When it was completed, little Henry undertook the sole management; but, like other managers, soon discovering that this was not so easy a task, and finding that even inanimate performers proved extremely troublesome, he was compelled to require the aid of his friend the call-boy. In due time, the new theatre opened under their joint management, and for some time went on flourishingly, when it suddenly stopped, like other theatres, though not from the same cause; not owing to thin houses, law, or fire, but in consequence of two envious juvenile spectators having watched their opportunity, and slyly run away with the whole *grand conceru!*

On Alltaet's being shown in, Vivid inquired why he had so long lost sight of him.

"It must be ten or twelve years since I last saw you."

"Even so, sir," was the reply. "Like many others of my profession, over-rating my talents, and aspiring to become prompter here, and afterwards head property-man in a metropolitan theatre, I refused a part in Bluebeard, then getting up."

"Indeed!" continued Vivid: "what might the part be?"

"Why, sir, the hind leg of the elephant; and on our

little Ryde governor threatening to forfeit me, I exclaimed, ‘ Better characters and a higher salary, or else, Mr. Grasply, *omne quod exit in hum.*’ ”

“ ‘ Very well, then,’ rejoined the manager, ‘ *Exit in hum,* Master Alltaet.’ ”

“ No sooner said than done; and ten years ago, packing up all my little property and *properties** in an old carpet bag, I started for the metropolis, when, on my arrival there, receiving from the major and minor potentates the usual cant answer, ‘ The company’s full,’ I was so reduced as to be at last compelled to fly ‘ to wakes and fairs and market towns,’ where I have almost ever since wandered in daily danger of becoming the victim of that severe parliamentary law (which, oh! let even *real satellites* not forget), the Vagrant Act †.”

“ Indeed!” rejoined Vivid: “ then, in your distress, why did you not sooner apply to me? However, better late than never; and I suppose you have not long returned to Ryd.”

“ No; only two days ago, sir: and the bladder of my vanity being completely pricked, I came to throw myself on Mr. Grasply’s generosity: but be proving to

* These consisted of a Promethean or phosphorus-box with the usual number of matches, a small quantity of red and blue flame, a stage dagger, a ditto pistol, a black and grotesque mask, &c. &c.

† Since writing the above, the act, as it concerns players, has been, surely very justly, repealed.

be still inexorable, this morning I was on the point of going Heaven knows where, for 'the world was all before me where to choose;' when hearing you were about to make a two years' tour, and at the same time understanding that you wanted a servant, I came, all fear, all hope, to apply for the place."

"What! would you accept of so menial a situation?"

"Oh! losers can't be choosers; and it would be the happiest 'moment' of my life if you would but say 'ay.'"

"I do say 'ay,' then; but only on one condition—namely, that you are to be considered as a confidential not as a common servant—more as a sort of *laquais de place*, with whom, during my tour, I am familiarly to converse—consult——"

Alltact here interrupted him, and attempted to return thanks; but gratitude choked the poor fellow's utterance. Vivid then, ringing the hell, requested the housekeeper to give him such refreshment as he chose to call for, adding, "Understand, Hannah, my late theatrical partner henceforth forms one of our establishment."

Whilst all these travelling arrangements were going on at Dr. Vivid's, preparations of another description were rapidly proceeding at Carisbrook House; for though Captain Morden expected to receive, in the course of the month, despatches from the Admiralty, ordering him to sail, yet this circumstance, backed by

the recollection of the old proverb, “Delays are dangerous,” only caused him and Lord Carisbrook to be more than ever impatient for the completion of the nuptials; and Lady Henrietta, though “still preyed upon by secret sorrow,” was (as before stated) so devotedly attached to her father, that instead of objecting to the early day he named, she only replied with Othello, “I can deny thee nothing.”

A special licence having been immediately applied for, at the expiration of a week it was received, when it was settled that the ceremony should take place on the following morning; and, what may be deemed rather a strange coincidence, the same day and hour had been fixed upon for the commencement of our hero’s tour.

Alltaet had already proved himself extremely active and useful; collecting, without troubling his master, all the necessary travelling paraphernalia, such as portmanteaus, portfolios, road-books, note-books, maps, small telescopes, and pistols, containing life* and death giving implements, not forgetting, of course, his own property, and stage properties. Vivid, meantime, having taken a tender leave of his father, and received from him several letters of introduction, he and Alltaet walked to the coach-office, where finding two places vacant for Newport, they secured them.

Whilst walking up and down, and waiting for that well-known signal for departure, “All’s right,” they

* Old madeira and sherry.

suddenly heard the church bells strike up a merry peal, and in a minute afterwards the report of cannon from Lord Carishrook's yacht, and also from his park. Not having an idea that Lady Henrietta's nuptials were so soon to be celebrated, Vivid was about to inquire the cause of these unexpected joyous demonstrations, when his suspicions were in some degree excited by three *avant-couriers*, in new and splendid liveries, with white favours, galloping past the inn gate, and proceeding towards the pier. In two minutes afterwards these suspicions were fully confirmed by the appearance of a postchaise and four, driven by postilions also wearing white favours, rapidly descending the hill and approaching the inn. The front window being down, and openly displaying the persons of the bride and bridegroom, Vivid could not refrain from pulling off his hat and making a respectful bow. They both saw him, and the captain in a warm and friendly manner kissed his hand to him. Not so Lady Henrietta, who was evidently greatly affected; but the bridegroom only ascribed the present and her previous agitation to the entering on this new and, he admitted, awful change of situation.

Two other carriages and four, containing the bridesmaids and Mrs. and Miss Almack, closed the splendid cavalcade, which soon arriving at the pier, the whole party embarked in Lord Carisbrook's yacht for Portsmouth, intending to leave that place instantly for

Southampton, and at a friend's house there pass the honeymoon.

The recollection that Lady Morden (for Vivid felt that such must henceforth be her name), in their late and too probably their last interview, had expressed such kind and generous feelings towards his father, now so strongly flashed across his mind, that, when summoned to take his place in the coach, his eye still wandered towards the pier, and he remained in such a state of abstraction, that Altaet was at length compelled thus to break silence :

"The stage has been some time waiting, sir; and if you please—— How? Is it possible?—Sighing, Mr. Vivid? and at the very moment when—— Why, if at the commencement of your long-wished-for tour you are thus suddenly despondent——"

This remark, and the coachman's determination to set off instanter, roused our hero from his reverie ; and mounting the roof, and the carriage proceeding at a rapid rate, Ryde was soon out of sight. Summoning philosophy at length to his aid, and recollecting that if before he had not even the slightest prospect of success, from this moment he had literally no prospect at all, and preferring the *certain* knowledge of his fate to the indulgence of a lingering and fallacious hope, his mind assumed a comparative calmness, and soon became occupied by his favourite subject—his dramatic tour.

And now, kind reader, be prepared for as strange and as rare an incident as ever perplexed author was doomed to record. You may remember that, notwithstanding Captain Morden almost every week expected to receive sailing orders, yet such was his and Lord Carisbrook's impatience that nothing could induce them to postpone the nuptials: you have also seen that Lady Henrietta consented: and thus prepared, pray mark the result.

On the bridal party landing at Portsmouth, the captain, to his great surprise, was sent for by the port-admiral, who said he was sorry to inform him that he had received by express, only half an hour ago, despatches from the Admiralty, ordering two frigates to put to sea immediately, and he regretted to add that the "Protector" was one. "The place of your destination," continued the admiral, "I am a stranger to, for you are to sail under sealed orders; but since you know as well as I do, that one moment's delay on these occasions is not under any circumstances allowable, I have already given the usual signal, and have no doubt but in another hour the ship will be completely ready to get under weigh."

The captain's astonishment and agitation were too uncontrollable to be totally suppressed; but he knew he had no alternative: his duty and character as a British officer (even under these extraordinary circumstances) required such instantaneous submission to the com-

mands of those whose obvious motive for these prompt exertions was solely their country's welfare, that he merely required a few minutes to take leave of Lord Carisbrook's daughter; which request being complied with, and having received the sealed orders, he proceeded towards the friend's house where he had just left her.

On second thought, however, wisely considering that time might be lost and no object gained by this abrupt and distressing interview, he thought fit to avoid it, and privately communicated the intelligence to her female friends, desiring them to break it to her by degrees; and having made them promise to console her with the idea that, as the cruise would terminate in a month, he should then return to meet her (as he trusted) in health and happiness, he hastened to the Protector's long boat; which rapidly bearing him to the vessel, the sails were unfurled, and the wind being completely fair, both frigates before the firing of the evening gun had passed St. Helen's and were quite out of sight.

Lady Henrietta's situation may be more easily conceived than described. As might be expected, she and her companions returned to her father's yacht, and thence once more to Carisbrook House, where the noble host certainly expressed his surprise and disappointment, but declared that if his son-in-law had hesitated one moment in adopting any other line of

conduct than the one he had adopted, he would never have forgiven him. As it was, he had fulfilled a sailor's duty; and Henrietta, like her father, ought to, and would, esteem him more than ever.



CHAPTER III.

The slavery of visiting at a country-house—A lynx eye and a neat hoax—A manager—Stars, and the *dramatic cat* let out of the bag—Harry Watkins—An old maid's diary, and a bold push for a dinner.

VIVID and his *laquais* arrived in the course of the afternoon at the Bugle, at Newport; but it was not his intention to stay there half an hour, since, amongst other letters of introduction given to him by his father, one was directed to Timothy Queermood, Esq., a magistrate and celebrated foxhunter, residing on his own estate near Newport. Being a man of very eccentric character, he was consequently well worthy of our tourist's observations: *ex grā.* to all culprits brought before him, and accused of assaults or petit larcenies, he was extremely lenient; and sometimes, in a case of felony, he would lean strongly towards the prisoner; but when the constable happened to bring before his worship a poor fellow charged with snaring a hare or shooting a pheasant on his worship's manor, he would dart from the magisterial chair, seize him by the collar, and calling him both a robber and a murderer, threaten to commit him capitally; but then, on the officer's re-

monstrating, and stating (as was the case the day before) that the accused had seven excuses for turning poacher—namely, a starving wife and six children—this odd official gentleman, feeling that “mercy ought to season justice,” would alter his tone and manner, take the poor trembling rustic by the hand, and having made him promise to reform, would make him a liberal present and discharge him.

The next singular trait he indulged in, was his style of conducting himself towards his fair and just creditors. To his wine-merchant, coal-merchant, and brewer, when they applied for the payment of their regular and reasonable bills, he would exclaim—“To prove my fairness, and to convince you at once of my aversion to litigious proceedings, I offer to leave the matter to arbitration.”

“Arbitration!” quoth each astonished tradesman. “Pooh! nonsense! my money without delay or deduction; or though *you* may be averse to litigious proceedings, we’ll show you —”

“Oh! Well, if you reject a fair offer —”

“We do positively; and unless this instant —”

“Nay, if that’s the case, though I might safely litigate all your accounts, there, rather than go to law, there’s the cash.”

To Vivid he gave a most marked and cordial welcome. As a proof, on the third day he allowed him to shoot on the best part of the manor; and what was at

least of equal importance, he communicated to him a variety of amusing and convertible anecdotes. Amongst others, this facetious esquire had lately been in London; and during the month he remained there, he scarcely passed a day without getting into two or three scrapes, one of which had involved him in the dilemma that of all others he really most dreaded, viz.—a lawsuit.

The case was this:—On his way, late one night, towards his residence in Hanover-square, “hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,” and complaining of the sly tricks Dame Fortune had lately played him, he suddenly perceived, by the light of the lamp, something on the pavement which excited his attention. Taking it up he beheld what the blind lady is rather shy of throwing in her victim’s way—a bank-note for one thousand pounds. “Oh ho!” quoth he; “she is coming about. Many happy returns!” and off he went in high glee, thoughtlessly conceiving, because nobody had seen him pick it up, that he had drawn a capital lottery prize.

However, at length the “morn and cold indifference came;” for the wine being out and some little wit being in, he was not so ignorant a magistrate as not to recollect that, by act of parliament, he was bound to advertise it, and consequently the following advertisement appeared in the newspapers of the next day:—

“FOUND, a bank-note for £1000. Whoever will call on Mr. Queer-nood, Hanover-square, and give

proof that he is the owner of the said property, it shall be immediately restored to him."

During the afternoon, as may be conceived, several speculative visitors "dropped in;" but none of them could produce satisfactory evidence. At length, a gentleman in a splendid barouche and four drove to the door, and our country squire, ordering him to be shown into the drawing-room, speedily joined him. The visitor apologised, and having stated that he had lost a note of that value, frankly confessed he had forgotten the number—"However," he added, "if it be *my* property, the initials of my name, *T. R.*, and *the day of the month*, will be found written in a very small hand on the back." Mr. Queerwood took the note from his pocket-book and examined it, but was sorry to report that there was no trace of any such memorandum. The gentleman was much embarrassed; but again apologising for giving so much trouble, repeated that the letters were so extremely *petites*, that unless the note were held considerably nearer to the light, they could not possibly be discerned. His worship took the hint, obeyed, and examined it closely at the window, but still in vain; and the visitor, after warmly thanking him, and acknowledging that he had no claim whatever to the property, departed.

In an hour afterwards, another inquirer, mounted on a fine horse, attended by a groom, and very gaily and

fashionably attired, informed Mr. Queerinoord that he had lost a bank-note for one thousand pounds, and immediately and accurately proceeded to give the *cashier's* name and the *number*. The squire, naturally satisfied that he was the right owner, delivered him the note, when the grateful visitor offered him a handsome reward; but this was politely declined, on the ground that the finder had merely done his duty.

“ Well, thank Heaven !” he exclaimed, “ this troublesome transaction has ended.” But, alas ! too soon he found that Fortune was at her tricks again; for the *barouche gentleman* having, by means of a *lynx eye*, and the *strong light of the window*, ascertained the full, true, and particular account of the cashier's name and number of the note, drove off to his *brother swindler*, who lost not a moment in sallying forth and bamboozling the unfortunate Mr. Queermood. The result was, that neither he nor the right owner of the £1000—an Irish peer, who from unusual bother only missed his loss two days afterwards—having thought of stopping payment at the bank, the present ingenious holder, in less than an hour from the time he came into possession, had driven into the city, and pocketed the whole sum. However, the Right Honourable “ real Simon Pure”—Lord O'Dunderhead—being informed that he had a legal claim for redress from his worship (on the ground of his not having

given notice to the bank), immediately brought an action against him.

Vivid was not much surprised at this proceeding; for though he knew little of law, he knew enough to have been long convinced, whilst in this country there were so many active practitioners (both with and without gowns and wigs), that every petty difference or mistake must necessarily admit of the *getting up* of a legal wrangle. However, to avoid one in this case, he recommended his host's own favourite system, arbitration, which being speedily agreed to, and referees named, it was at length awarded, that the finder of the note was not bound to make any compensation to the owner; and here it was expected the matter would terminate. But no; his enraged lordship disputed the award, and, commencing another action, the scene (to quote a Covent-garden play-bill) was "augmented interminable."

Vivid (as has been seen) continued to "pick up provisions for the dramatic concert;" yet, so far from passing his time either agreeably or comfortably at Squire Queermood's, at the end of the week he bitterly began to feel the monotony and slavery usually experienced by visitors at a gentleman's country seat. Compelled rigidly to keep the host's own hours—to breakfast at six, dine at three, and go to bed supperless at nine; then, again, to pursue two sports he most disliked—

hunting and fishing; and also to mix in the society of the squire's neighbours—a set of rural *Huns*, who, when our hero made use, in argument, of a word consisting of more than two syllables, actually stared at him like so many Hottentots. Thus almost hourly undergoing privations and annoyances, is it surprising that, on the eighth day, he ordered his valet to pack up, and, taking rather an abrupt leave of his *ultra eccentric* host, set off for Cowes?

Sam Alltuck, who had been a fellow-sufferer with his master, and during half the time had been sent to Coventry by his companions “at the lower end of the hall,” was naturally equally delighted to leave this modern Sir Tumbelly—this “savage and his den.”

On their arrival at Cowes, they embarked immediately for Southampton, where they landed early in the evening, when, although Vivid had letters of introduction to three families in the town and neighbourhood, he would not present them; “for,” quoth he to himself, “*experientia docet*,” and, dreading a renewal of rural *hot water*, wisely preferred that abode of freedom and of ease, or as Dr. Johnson observes, that “grand luxury,” a good inn.

Taking up his quarters, therefore, at the “Star,” he was recognised by the landlord, who had been formerly a resident at Ryde, and, having been attended by Dr. Vivid, and cured of a serious illness, was so happy

to have this opportunity of showing his son every attention and accommodation, that, notwithstanding the house was crowded almost to "an overflow," this grateful Boniface contrived to give Vivid not only a small parlour, but also one of the best bed-rooms.

Having become once more his own master, Vivid ordered supper; and just as he was about to commence operations, his kind landlord entered with a very long face, and, after some hesitation, explained the cause.

"I am afraid, sir," said he, "I shall give offence; but a gentleman, a very old frequenter of this inn, has this moment arrived in a post-chaise, and as he dislikes supping in the coffee-room, and as you know even the bar is completely occupied, if you would but so far accommodate me as to allow him a corner of your apartment——"

"Certainly," interrupted our hero. "In the first place, I travel solely to see character; and in the next, after your marked civility and attention, do you think I will be the means of your risking the loss of an old customer? No; pray oblige me by showing the gentleman in."

The landlord bowed, retired, and almost immediately afterwards returned, ushering in the expected stranger, who appeared to be a person about fifty years of age, of rather prepossessing manners and address; and

so little reserved in his conversation, and so frank, ingenuous, and entertaining, that in less than a quarter of an hour he and Vivid were as familiarly communicative as if they had been acquainted with each other for many years.

After supper, the social glass was being pushed merrily about, when Altaet hastily entered; and, with a countenance replete with joy and astonishment, requested to speak one word in private with his master. Our hero, after some little hesitation, and much beckoning on the part of Sam, consented; and they had scarcely got outside the door, when the agitated valet whispered pretty loudly in his master's ear—

“ ‘Tis the manager.”

“ Who? what manager?” replied Vivid.

“ Why, the stranger with whom you have been conversing and supping is no less a personage than the director of one of the metropolitan winter theatres, and the very gentleman who refused your comedy, and recommended —”

“ Heavens!—Mr. Candide!”

“ The same. Over a bottle of porter in the tap-room, I have this moment pumped the secret out of his servant.”

Vivid lost not a moment in re-entering the parlour, but so changed, so respectful: the familiarity which he lately indulged in had completely vanished; and

every question and answer being prefaced and terminated with that formal monosyllable, "sir," Mr. Candide (for Alltact was correct in his intelligence) could not refrain from expressing his surprise at this sudden alteration in his new acquaintance's manner and character.

The mystery was instantly solved by Vivid putting into his hands the kind, memorable, and important letter.

The manager smiled, and endeavoured to restore his companion to his former feeling of equality, but in vain. No lover ever felt more awkward, or awe-stricken, in the presence of his mistress, than our enthusiastic young dramatist felt at this moment; for he saw before him, or rather fancied that he saw, the man who was doomed to preside over his future fate.

"Come," said Mr. Candide, "sit down, sir, and I will soon convince you that I am not exactly so great and powerful a personage as you suppose me to be. First, give me your hand; next, a bumper to our better acquaintance. There; and now allow me to ask—Would you treat an actor with similar respect?"

"Certainly not, sir. I look upon him as one, who, in most respects, is a dependent on the manager."

"You mistake. The manager is, now-a-days, dependent on him, at least on every first-rate performer; but, by way of preamble, please to understand that the

remarks I am about to make are only applicable to those actors and actresses who demand and receive large nightly salaries; for as to the second, third, and fourth-rate performers, *i. e.* the stock company—why, looking upon each of them as my fellow-labourer in an unproductive vineyard I am consequently their advocate and champion."

"I comprehend: you only mean to complain of what Churchill calls the "monarch players*."

"Certainly not. But the truth is, since the star system commenced, and the salaries have been nearly more than *trebled*, these 'monarch players' have become so much above their employer, that when on a Saturday (pay day) I drive to the theatre in a hackney-coach, I am often prevented getting up to the stage door in consequence of the number of their gay chariots, cabriolets, and other handsome equipages."

"Indeed! and authors?" earnestly inquired Vivid, but in his usual unsophisticated style. "How many authors' carriages drive up?"

"Oh! as to authors," replied the smiling manager, "two or three of them, perhaps, mount old umbrellas; but when *some* people are overpaid, *other* people must be necessarily underpaid, you know, and——"

"No monarch e'er
Was half so haughty as a monarch player."
"CHURCHILL.

"How? why, I thought, at least I have heard of a thousand pounds having been made by a comedy."

"True; but in that day there were no stars, or if there were, they had gazers, and at any rate did not *rise* in demand as they *fell* in attraction. Colman received for John Bull eleven hundred pounds, and he well deserved such remuneration; for the comedy averaged four hundred and seventy pounds for forty-eight nights, and the salary of no actor who performed in it (and amongst such actors were George Cooke, Lewis, Fawcett, Emery, John Johnstone, &c.) exceeded twenty pounds a week *; whereas 'there *be* players' who latterly have actually received *double* that sum per night! and this at the time when a first-rate actor (not singer) at Paris is content with getting about four hundred pounds per annum †."

* Mrs. Siddons in the "meridian of her glory," received one thousand pounds for eighty nights (i. e. about twelve pounds per night). Mrs Jordan's salary, in her meridian, amounted to thirty guineas per week. John Kemble, when actor and manager at Covent-garden, was paid thirty six pounds per week. Miss O'Neill, twenty-five pounds per week. George Cooke, twenty pounds. Lewis, twenty pounds, as actor and manager. Edwin, the best *buffo* and burletta singer that ever trod the English stage, only fourteen pounds per week; and Mrs. H. Siddons, by far the best representative of Juliet I ever saw, nine pounds per week. After this, may we not exclaim—

"Ye little stars! hide your diminished heads!"

† There is no general rule without an exception, and some first-rate performers have been certainly liberal enough not to

"Well; but excuse me, my good sir, if the system does not answer, why go on giving such high and ruinous salaries?"

"Why, 'there's the rub,' and I can only thus explain the case:—You have heard, I presume, of two rival stage-coach proprietors, who, in the frenzy of competition, blind with rage and jealousy, became so determined to outvie each other in the number of customers, that at last each ran his coach from Exeter to London, not only *gratis*, but actually paid for every passenger's provisions during the journey. Such is nearly mine and my rival manager's *stage* contest; and till we can get an *understanding* (not so easy a theatrical acquirement, I assure you), and imitate the example of our predecessors, those firm allies, Messrs. Sheridan and Harris*, why, season after season we shall only open the doors of our magnitudinous concerns to find *provisions* for others, certainly not for ourselves."

"So it appears; and yet I believe, sir, you will frankly acknowledge, that you sometimes reap a productive harvest."

"We do, once in three or four years; and *entre nous*, I'll tell you how such harvest is produced; but mind, your finger on your lips."

Vivid bowed assent, and Mr. Candide continued.

adhere to the Cocker or Change-alley system—"a bargain's a bargain."

* And long afterwards continued by Mr. Henry Harris and Mr. Elliston.

"Why, aware, sir, that of late years more has been achieved *off* than *on* the stage, we invent, or rather *manufacture*, an histrionic *lion* or *lioness**."

"What? I don't understand."

"Observe! In the event of two or three disastrous seasons, that formidable champion, the press, always most liberally and good-naturedly comes forward, and offers to rally round the falling house. After various preparatory sprites, we then bring out our manufactured novelty—our aforesaid lion or lioness—of course taking care that the curtain shall draw up to a crowded audience; for if it be a bad house, the town regularly deem it to be a bad performance. Then, as to applause, in addition to our own rank and file, the dread of closing our doors induces so many hundreds to open their hands and mouths, that three *rounds* and continued *bravos* are secured to every attitude and trap-clap. Next, if a tragedy be selected for this important first appearance, we rely on the never-failing pathetic author's producing tears; but having three or four *fainters* at command, we ourselves bring them into action."

"Capital! Why, you leave nothing to chance?"

"Nothing; for, the curtain down, the hackneyed call, amidst waving of hats and handkerchiefs, is huzzaingly made and acceded to. Laurel is likewise thrown on the stage; and next morning the *toczin* of panegyric

* A cant term for new sights.

heing, sounded in every liberal paper, in a day or two aftery the manager not only raises the salary, but publicly, in the green-room, makes a brilliant and appropriate present; next, most of the print-shops display a likeness of the new wonder, whose *defects* actually become *beauties**; then, in case of the slightest indisposition, bulletins are issued, and the box-keeper is also ordered to state that 'not a box is to be had for a month.' Such a sufficient quantity of *dust* is thrown into John Bull's eyes†, that he cannot see any mode of escape, and therefore, though at last he *finds it out*, he *comes* till he *does find it out*; and which act of kindness is all that is required in a city whose population consists of above a million and a half of capable customers. There—don't you call this management†?"

* As I have elsewhere stated, so completely was this the case during the John Wilkes *mania*, that one of his enthusiastic admirers boldly advocated the glaring defect in his eye, and swore he "*squinted no more than a gentleman ought to do*."

† I speak chiefly of the indiscriminating John Bulls, not of those who think and judge for themselves, of whch, thank Fortune! there are still a considerable number.

‡ It is as singular as true, that when these male or female, holstered-up novices become (in two or three years), by practice and experience, *bond fide* good second-rate performers, then, my lord, my lady, and the other indiscriminating Johns, never attend their performances. Then, also, defects are no longer considered as beauties; and what the aforesaid Johns (during their *rage*) called a *music-w* voice, is now proved to be a *whining* one; and a *Grecian nose*, a *pug one*!



"I do, I do! and although to me these dramatic tactics are all new, I must certainly confess, on arriving in town, I have, like others, more than once felt that I could not show my face till I had seen Mr., or Master, or Miss, whatever might be the name of the 'new wonder.' And although I then saw, or fancied I saw, 'the hand of the conjuror,' yet I was more than half afraid to say so."

"To be sure: and after our friend, John Bull, who is, individually, often a shrewd, good fellow, but, collectively, generally very *fat-headed*, having taken one

boy for the genuine Shakspeare, and another boy for a superior Garrick *, why can the town call us traitors? No—or if they do, may we not answer—

‘ Hic murus aheneus esto,
Nil concire sibi nulla pallescere culpa ?’”

“ Yes; and, conscientiously speaking, where is the moral turpitude in raising a young performer and surrounding family probably from poverty to independence†? and, by a successful season, of procuring the means of satisfying our own fair and honourable creditors?”

The clock at this moment striking “twelve,” Mr. Candide rose, and hoped, if his companion thought his observations had been *over* severe, he would remember Churchill’s well-known couplet:

“ The stage I chose, a subject fair and free;
‘Tis mine, ‘tis yours, ‘tis public property.”

Vivid agreed with him that it was every way decidedly a fair subject for criticism, and they parted for the night.

In the morning, notwithstanding Mr. Candide had thus let out the secrets of his *prison-house* (probably no great misnomer), Vivid’s “ardour” remaining un-

* Young Ireland and Master Betty.

† Taking the country engagements into account, even to affluence.

abated, the former cheered him with the hope, that dramatic literature would soon revive; and in the mean time advised him to continue his system, seeing life and picking up character. "For myself," added he, "I have often thought that, had I been a dramatist, particularly in this dull, common-place age, I would, for want of a better character, have *manufactured* an original one. First, I would have started it up and down Regent-street in a strange eccentric dress: secondly, I would have involved it in wild extraordinary adventures: thirdly, I would have paragraphed and caricatured it; and when its notoriety was completely established, I would immediately have dramatised it."

Our hero smiled; and, thanking him for the hint, inserted it in his memorandum-book. Here terminated their friendly meeting; for Mr. Candide being bound for the island, and being informed that the packet was on the point of sailing, hastily took leave; previously having made the interesting young dramatist promise that, on his arrival* in London, he would call and renew their acquaintance.

* As the author of this book has admitted that his profit (during his long career) on his dramatic writings has amounted to nearly twenty thousand pounds, these attacks on public credulity may be called ungracious and ungrateful; allow him, therefore, considerate readers, to republish his defence. (Vide his *Life*, vol. ii. p. 355.) "On the first night of a new play, I consider there is always a fair fight between the author and the audience; and if the former get the better, whom has he to thank for his suc-

Mr. Candide had scarcely left the room when Alltact entered, and, giving his master a letter, told him a servant 'in a splendid livery waited for an answer. It was written by one of the Southampton grandees, to whom Vivid's father had given him a letter of introduction, and who, having accidentally discovered he was sojourning at the Star Inn, sent him an invitation to dinner. The latter part of the letter was thus curiously worded:

"And I would advise you by all means not to neglect coming to-day, because I can promise you a treat, which I can seldom offer, and which our envious neighbours, as usual, have tried to deprive me of. You will positively meet Harry Witkins!"

"I remain, dear sir,

"Very truly yours,

"TOBIT STURGEON."

"Now who the deuce is Harry Witkins?" was our hero's first exclamation.

"Why, sir, with submission," replied Sam, "since studying character is your object, you certainly ought to go and see."

cess but himself? I am no traitor to *John Bull*. I believe he is more inclined to be good-natured than ill-natured; but, in my humble opinion, a *dramatic writer* is no more indebted to the public for the money he makes by them, than is a merchant, a hanker, or any other active *speculator*."

"Well—my compliments to Mr. Sturgeon, and I will do myself the pleasure of waiting upon him; but—"still harping' on Harry Witkins—^A who can it be?"

"Possibly a great wit, sir."

"Ay, I hope so, for that's a character I have seldom, if ever, seen. However, 'tis but to restrain my curiosity and anxiety for an hour or two, and then the mighty mystery will be revealed."

So saying, he waited patiently till the appointed period arrived.

On being shown into the drawing-room, the only persons he beheld were Mr. Sturgeon (whom he soon found out to be a first-rate twaddle), his wife, and three or four other demure, staring dowagers; but very soon after, a few male guests dropping in, Vivid was much disappointed at not hearing either of them called by the name of the "promised treat;" and again was more disappointed on hearing the sighing host exclaim—

"Suppose, after all, Harry Witkins disappoints us!"

At this moment, however, the door opened, and in stalked the "grand cock of the party," a man about forty, with an uncouth gait, and a round, chubby, florid face.

"I beg pardon," he said: "I was detained in the billiard-room, and I imagine you all thought I was going to stay there."

"*Going to stay!*" re-echoed the chuckling Mr. Sturgeon; and this inadvertent expression (for our supposed extraordinary genius did not at all mean it as a joke) was followed by nods of approbation and loud roarings of laughter.

He bowed, joined in the laugh, and wriggled, self-satisfied, to his chair.

After one or two more similar chance hits, the party was summoned to the dinner table, where the sport continued with equal spirit and success. At the end of any common remark, he accompanied it with such a significant cock of the eye and a titter, that the predetermined "groundlings" could not resist copying his example, and loudly cheering what they did not at all understand. One point was voted the *ne plus ultra* of humour. On Mrs. Sturgeon's asking him whether she should have the pleasure of helping him to some more goose, he archly replied,

"Thank you: another draft on *Gosling and Co.*, if you please."

Here the room rang with cries of "Oh stop! pray stop, Mr. Witkins, or you'll be the death of us!"

In short, every body took "the drunkard for a god" but Vivid; who, instead of relishing his jokes, preserved such a fixed, imperturbable countenance, that at length the hostess asked him why he did not participate in the enjoyment of such delightful and brilliant conversation?

"I can't tell," he replied: "I suppose I am become decidedly opaque."

"Indeed!" she rejoined; "'t is very singular; you see the whole audience are delighted with him."

"Granted: but pray, are all audiences equally delighted with him? Excuse me, madam, but may I ask, did you ever meet the gentleman in London society?"

"Often, and particularly in Somerset-house, where, I assure you, he is the life and soul of the commissioners of the victualling office."

On hearing this whimsical instance of his success, our hero's features immediately relaxed; and during the remainder of the evening he went with the stream, and with reason, for he now saw that "Harry Witkins" would some day or other figure among his dramatis personæ.

About ten o'clock the company broke up; and most of the male guests walking away together, the "old story" commenced. One complained of the bad cookery; another of the bad wine; another of the room being too hot; and all joined in quizzing the dress and conversation of the host and hostess. Only one visitor spoke in their favour, and he simply on one ground, namely, that of their extreme hospitality.

"*Extreme* with a vengeance!" exclaimed another. "I've been as much *bored* by their hospitality as Gulliver was by the Brobdignag monkey, who carried him off in his arms, and poked pounds of chewed food out of his own jaws into those of the gorged traveller."

So much for giving dinners; as before stated, nobody is satisfied.

A day or two afterwards, a left-out "Capulet" at this "Montagu" meeting, encountering our hero in the Star coffee-room, sarcastically inquired whether he had heard of the late unfortunate *eclaircissement* at his friend Mr. Tobit Sturgeon's? The reply being in the negative, the tittle-tattle, irritated absentee thus continued:

"Miss Cassino, an old maiden *bas bleu* of seventy-six, long residing in the neighbourhood, and who had kept a diary for the last thirty years, dying about a month ago, her sister, Mrs. Sturgeon, with great caution and foresight (knowing the departed old maid was as fond of calumny as of cats), brought away the said diary, and informed her husband that she intended to burn it. To this proposal the sapient Tobit objected; stating, that as the publication of posthumous works was now quite the 'rage,' and as he knew he had always been a very great favourite of Miss Cassino's, he did not see why a work that might produce to him both fame and profit should be thus thrown away."

"Right well argued!" quoth our hero; "but what was the result?"

"Why," continued the *cut* Capulet, "old Sturgeon, snatching the manuscript from his wife's hands, vauntingly exclaimed—'Come, let somebody read aloud a few pleasant extracts!' And *somebody* (no less a personage than Harry Witkins, *did* read as follows:—'Jan. 1.—Dined again to-day at Tobit Sturgeon's:

he was more beastly drunk and disagreeable than ever. N. B. Thought my sister was rather too broadly attentive to Mr. Harry Witkins; however, poor soul! with such a stupid old set of a husband, who would deny her a little innocent *bardinage*?—"Down dropped Dido"—alias, the diary—for the reader had not courage to proceed.* Such was Tobit's rage, that, in a few minutes, not a vestige of the manuscript remained; yet, as may be supposed, during a whole month afterwards, mutual sulkiness and suspicion became the regular order of the day."

Vivid, after a short pause (guessing the stranger's motive for thus disclosing family secrets), rather quaintly, but with his usual ingenuousness, rejoined,

"Excuse me—I mean no offence, sir; but, I dare say, when Mr. and Mrs. Sturgeon next give a dinner, they will not forget to invite you."

"They *shall* invite me," he replied, "or, as Pistol says, 'all bell shall stir for this'; not that I experience real gratification at receiving an invitation from any but *Transcendents* or *Exclusives*; but the fact is, being in what is called the visiting stream, if I once get out of the current, I may probably sink for ever—you understand—I cannot afford to have it said that I was not seen even at such a house as Mr. Sturgeon's."

"No!" exclaimed Vivid.

"No; and, *entra nous*, aware of the danger of being left out of such a splendid establishment as Sir George B****'s, where I occasionally visit, and who last week

omitted asking me to a grand dinner, what do you think I did?—I boldly went.”

“ How!—notwithstanding you were *left out*? ”

“ I did!—coolly *asked myself*—and took my place at the table; where, though he stared at me, reddened, and neither bowed nor spoke; yet politeness towards his other guests, and the dread of seeing them annoyed by any confusion or disturbance, induced the cautious baronet so completely to choke his rage, that I not only passed an agreeable day, but strutted home, exclaiming, ‘ Though I was not either amongst the called or the chosen, yet *I* was there ! ’ ”

Vivid for a moment or two was naturally struck dumb with astonishment, but soon recovering himself, said—“ I do understand ; ” and congratulating himself on not being in the “ visiting stream,” he wished the *excluded* good night, and retired to rest.



CHAPTER IV.

A parson and a fiddler—A Westminster and a Winchester schoolboy—A peep behind the curtain—A noble lord and the Annals—A house-warming and an accident—Engravers—R.A.'s—And hanging committee.

Our hero next morning was expressing his surprise to Alltaet at not having received any letter since he left home, when the waiter brought him one with the Ryde post-mark. The writer, Dr. Vivid, gave such a full, true, and interesting account of Captain Morden's immediate departure after his marriage, that Vivid, who thought he should never more feel sensitive on this occasion, now experienced such evident annoyance, that his anxious *laquais* asked him if the letter contained any bad tidings?

"None," he replied; "but in my answer to my father, I shall request him never more to allude to Lord Carisbrook or his family.—Never!—for the truth is, the subject is most harassing to my feelings; and, till I can personally explain the cause, I shall hope, on that point, he will preserve a total silence."

This resolution having somewhat composed him, he sat down, wrote the letter, and sent it to the post-office. Still remaining, however, in an abstracted, gloomy state, Alltaet, in the hope of raising his master's spirits, advised him to procure a gig, and take an airing in the new forest. He consented; and, "as they trotted along the road," the ever pains-taking valet tried to amuse him with giving the sketch of some characters which, during their stay, he had encountered in the inn. One of the persons alluded to was, in his better days, the tragic hero of the Ryde company, and, receiving a salary of twenty-five shillings per week, was considered as rather "a prosperous gentleman;" but being (what is not uncommon in histrionic life) a great epicure, a delicious feeder, the *inward* man was constantly better lined than the *outward*; and, at the present period, though old and poor, he possessed an appetite which required more pampering than that of a Franciscan friar; *ex. gra.* when Alltaet complained of the prevailing cold north-westerly wind, and hoped it would change.

"Fortune forbid!" exclaimed Apicius; "for if it remain in the same quarter all night, we shall have to-morrow luxurious red mullets at ninepence apiece."

Another sketch of character he gave was that of an Irish post-boy, who had on the previous night driven a gentleman from Winchester to the Star Inn; and, torrents of rain having fallen during the whole stage,

the traveller, on getting out, civilly said to red-faced Paddy,

“Are you not very wet?”

“Arrah!” he replied, “I don’t know about being *wet*, but, plase your honour, I am very *dry*.”

A third anecdote was that of an actor, whose lower limbs (*i. e.* those by which he walked) were so tremendously thick and unwieldy, that, on his being thrown out of a cab, the wags said, that he had broken his right leg with the *greatest difficulty*.

Alltact was on the point of commencing another anecdote, when, in consequence of continued stings from those worrying insects, the forest-flies, the horse took fright, and becoming unmanageable, the result might have proved of a serious description, had not a passer-by gallantly seized the reins, and dexterously stopped the terrified animal.

Vivid, on recovering from his alarm, and approaching his deliverer to return thanks, beheld in him an old acquaintance, George St. Alm, a fellow-student in the Temple; who, having soon given up the law for the church, had entered himself at Cambridge; and there, having regularly kept his terms, he and our hero had not met for years.

St. Alm held a very small living in the neighbourhood; and it was soon settled that in his parsonage the two students should pass the remainder of the day.

Cambridge (it soon appeared to Vivid) had not at all improved the young clergyman's manners; indeed, how should it improve them, when at that university, as well as at Oxford—notwithstanding both places may undoubtedly boast of possessing most respectable female society, that best refiner and polisher of the uncouth—the young collegian has few if any opportunities of mixing in it; consequently the "young idea" is left wholly "to shoot" in mathematics—mathematics*!

Such was St. Alm's case; and his temper, at the same time, not improving, he took huff, and abruptly left Cambridge, in consequence, as is supposed, of the following bad pasquinade having been applied to him:

" When Jacky Bull becomes cantab,
A gosling moves in college shackles,
But cramm'd, till mathematic mad,
A fat and finish'd gander cackles."

Next, of course, in imitation of other young men who are constantly grumbling and growling at the unparalleled hardships of their profession, St. Alm was

* How different the course pursued by the London University! Vide the advertisement:—"Natural philosophy, jurisprudence, English law, mathematics, French, German, Italian, Oriental and Hebrew languages, and literature, philology, anatomy, astronomy, chemistry, &c."

any thing but *suave*; yet, it must be confessed, if any practitioner has a right to complain of the dulness and dependence of his calling, it is a young unpatronized clergyman.

Our hero, in his eagerness to investigate character, inquired if he had found much difficulty in getting ordained.

"Certainly," replied St. Alm; "for the bishop under whom I passed my examination was remarkably punctilious and rigid. Think of being compelled for four hours, on five successive days, to answer the most abstruse and complicated questions! and all off hand—all without being allowed to refer, for one moment, to either notes or books."

"A pleasant morning's work!" replied Vivid.

"Extremely so!—I had not been in the room half an hour before the right reverend formidably exclaimed—'Name to me in chronological order all the fathers of the christian church; and then give me a brief history of each!'

"Better and better! and, I suppose, yours was the usual conundrum answer, 'I give it up.'"

"No: I contrived, after much *scratchpole* work, to reply tolerably satisfactorily; but in the attempt to answer the next, I had nearly lost my senses. 'Tell me (continued his lordship) the commencement, continuation, and termination of the contest between the Lollards and the Catholics.' Now, being totally in the dark on this historical point, I at length threw myself

on his generosity, and he very liberally passed on to the rest of my examination."

" Well," resumed Vivid, "conscientiously, the noble examiner may be right; but—"

" He is right; for though the inquiry might possibly, with safety, be rendered less severe, yet, consider what would be the state of the church if, through carelessness, illiterate and clownish persons were frequently ordained. For myself, however—oh that I had been permitted to follow my late father's profession!—but pride—my mother's pride!"

" Indeed! and pray, may I ask, what was his profession?"

" A musician, who, by teaching, arranging, and composing, acquired an income of above one thousand pounds 'per annum;' whilst I, educated to soar far above (what my mother called) *vulgar tweedle dum and tweedle dee*, and decreed, by her, to become, most assuredly, either lord chancellor or archbishop of Canterbury, am now *grubbing* on upon a small living of less than one hundred pounds per annum—ay, and though my father could afford to keep his cabriolet, groom, and riding horse, here is his son, not only performing duty on foot at the neighbouring church, but compelled to walk (in all weathers) to another, three miles off, and there read prayers and preach twice every week."

" Why, certainly," rejoined Vivid, "in this public and private *sing-song* age, a few lessons in music may

prove more productive to a boy than a hundred in Greek and Latin; but, then, consider the different rank in life——”

“ Ay! do.—Consider independence, comfort, happiness. Besides, where, *where* is my boasted rank? If honoured by an invitation to dinner from the lord of the village, the grand squire; why, every familiar foxhunter at the table first bawls out, ‘ Come, pass the bottle, master parson;’ and, next, ‘ Give us one of your prime bacchanalian songs, master parson.’ No! if ever I marry, and have a son——”

“ Well!” continued Vivid, “ what then?”

“ Why, see if I don’t put a fiddle into his little hand the moment he is out of his leading-strings: yes! and make him serape away till he obtains a *tip-top* musical reputation. Then, when, consequently, he gets into *tip-top* society, and plays and sings, who will dare to sport the familiar, and call him ‘ Master Tweedle Dum?’ Clergyman, indeed! Look at a Welsh curate, with his thirty pounds per annum, and say, if now-a-days even a blind fiddler is not a more prosperous personage.”

“ Why, there is so much truth in these observations, that I sincerely wish you had some rich relative, capable of aiding or promoting you.”

“ I have one—an uncle—a prosperous attorney, and who, when I complained to him of the hardships of my profession, coolly replied, • I am glad you have

preferred the church to the law, if only for one reason—a parson must be *always* a parson; he cannot ring the changes*, and consequently will not wind up the joke, like other young *hopefuls*, who, after inducing their relatives to pay high premiums to special pleaders, or architects, or surgeons, or artists, will find, at last (*i. e.* at a pretty advanced, unimprovable age) that they have no profession at all.”

“ Well, don’t despair, or under-rate your situation; for, in my mind, you have chosen a fair, honourable, and, as may be proved hereafter, productive vocation: in the mean time, therefore, cheer up, and say with the poet,

‘ The cloud that wraps the present hour
Serves but to brighten all our future days.’ ”

Here Vivid, after thanking his friend, and promising to correspond with him, took leave, and returned to Southampton.

Next morning, he and his man Sam started by the coach for the metropolis, and the weather being remarkably fine, Vivid rode outside with Allact. Amongst other passengers, there were two little boys about eight or nine years of age, accompanied by a livery servant; and it appeared, from their conversation, that one was

* The Rev. John Horne Tooke, not being allowed to change his profession, was excluded from the bar and the House of Commons.

a Winchester and the other a Westminster scholar. The Bartholomewtide holidays having lately concluded, they were both returning to *purgatory*, and were disputing aloud which had undergone, or would still undergo most school hardships. The little Winchester asked his fellow-sufferer if ever he had been locked up by the big boys (as he termed them) in Westminster Abbey?

"Because," added he, "last winter I passed one whole frosty night in our cathedral."

"Very well," replied the Westminster, "and what did I and five little second-form boys undergo, one dark December evening, in the cloisters?"

"What?" rejoined the little Winchester.

"Why, the gravediggers having dug a deep grave (preparatory to a corpse being buried in it next morning) as usual, placed a few loose boards over it, and left their work for the night. Soon after, as I and my little chums were passing, in our way from school to our boarding-house, we were suddenly pounced upon and seized by half a dozen head boys, who, having removed the boards, instantly, *sans ceremonie*, forced us all into the grave; and then, having replaced the said boards, they all commenced dancing upon them, and thus sung aloud:

"Earth shall cover ye,
We'll dance over ye,
Fol lol de riddle loll."

Then, would you believe it? though we were shuddering—nay, almost senseless with cold and terror, yet, on their stamping, and, in a loud threatening tone, calling out ‘Chorus! join in chorus!’ we were actually obliged to sing out, or rather sigh out,

‘Earth don’t cover us,
They dance over us,
Fol-lol-de-riddle-loll—Oh! oh! oh!’



“However,” continued the Westminster, “the abbey clock tolling nine, our tyrannical seniors all fled to the

dormitory, and we, the poor entombed juniors, more dead than alive, crawled out, one by one, and at last tottered to the boarding-house, where the increased dread of our despotic lords compelled us, in answer to the mistress' inquiries, to assign any cause but the real one for our alarm and absence."

The little Winchester resumed; and, as if his senses had not yet recovered from the fright, thus flourished away:

"Ay; but on that night, when I was shut up in the cathedral, on the bell tolling 'one,' did not a supernatural light make its appearance—and did not the organ, of its own accord, strike up? and, then, did not the effigies of Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop Gardiner, William Rufus, and Inigo Jones, led on by the grim king of anties, commence the 'dance of death?' and then —"

Here the argument was stopped by the stopping of the coach. The disputants and other travellers having now arrived at the George Inn, Winchester, the footman descended with the impassioned orator, and conducting him towards the school, the debate was adjourned to (at least) that "day six months."

Having changed horses, the coachman proceeded on his journey, which did not prove at all productive to our hero; for, except an original remark or two from an outside passenger (who pretended to be a great admirer of scenery, and whose name was Point-blank, as

he afterwards discovered), he heard nothing worthy of inserting in his memorandum-book.

Vivid was complaining of the coarse, uncourteous conduct of those upstarts, as he properly called them, who make it a rule never to answer letters.

"Indeed!" replied this odd, glum Mr. Pointblank; "why, then, I am the most uncourteous man living; for I not only never answer letters, but I seldom—ha, ha! no, not once in twenty times *open* them."

"Not open them?"

"No! no more would you, if you had as many duns as I have—ha, ha!—Why, I have not paid a debt these two years; and I only mean to pay one more."

"And, pray, what may that be?"

"Why, the debt of nature—ha, ha!"

"Upon my word, very new and original! but you contrive to make others pay?"

"To be sure I do.—Special original—no sham law—no writ of error, &c.—you take, and I take—touch the dumps—ha, ha!"

At this moment the coachman was hailed by a foot-passenger, who, getting on the roof, recognised Mr. Pointblank, and civilly asked him how he did?

No answer.

"I hope," the new passenger continued, "I hope you are very well?"

The *original* surlily nodded assent.

"And Mrs. Pointblank—I hope your wife is also well?"

"She is; and, as I've often told you, will be so till she dies—there—ha, ha!"

"And the little ones?"

"D—— the little ones! and if you've no taste yourself, let those who have taste enjoy this beautiful scenery. Look! (*extending his telescope, and roughly pushing his cut chum aside*) look! did you ever see such a sight as that?"

"Yes! I have seen a much finer sight," replied his enraged companion, "and one which you never saw in your whole life, and, more than that, never will see!—Look here! a tailor's bill with a receipt to it."

The roars of laughter that followed this just rebuke much annoyed Mr. Pointblank, who, arriving at the place of his destination (a farm-house near Farnham) alighted and took French leave of the whole party, whilst Vivid, without picking up any more dramatic crumbs, in a few hours afterwards arrived at the Gloucester Coffeehouse, where, according to his late custom (instead of making use of any of his father's letters to various London friends) he took up his residence.

On the day after his arrival, however, he paid one visit, and the reader will probably not be much astonished when he is told that the name of the person so favoured was Mr. Candide, the manager; and who,

by the warm reception he gave Vivid, delighted him. But the kindness did not end here; for soon perceiving, by his numerous characteristic anecdotes, that the young dramatist had reported great progress, our wise theatrical potentate, ever the encourager of rising talent, ever possessing that grand managerial requisite, foresight, not only gave him a general invitation, but presented him with a card of free-admission both before and behind the curtain. The latter was "an honour that our hero dreamt not of," and he hailed it as the first sprig of dramatic laurel destined to adorn his brow.

The idea of being allowed to attend a rehearsal, and take a seat in the green-room, was naturally to him more gratifying than would have been the possession of a seat in parliament. But, alas! "how fleeting are man's hopes?" for if a reporter feels shocked and irritated at hearing the cry of "Clear the gallery!" how much more annoyed did Vivid feel, when, at the commencement of the rehearsal, not only did the prompter bawl out "Clear the stage!" but an actor at the same time assured him that if he did not instantly obey the order, the sceneshifters would whirl him into the flies, or whisk him down a trap?—of course, "Exit in disgrace!"

The green-room, however, he conceived would at night amply recompense him for the morning's disappointment, particularly as on that evening a drama was to be performed for the first time. On entering this

famed verdant scene, our courteous hero made a respectful bow, but which probably was not at all observed, since not a soul returned it. As to conversation, he soon found that that was out of the question, for many, not being perfect in their parts, were learning them; others were curveting before the looking-glass; and some were stamping and complaining that they could not manage to get such d—d stuff into their heads. "If the poor author were present!" muttered Vivid.

"He *is* present," rejoined a little, pale, trembling, face-making gentleman, who sat next to him.

"Indeed!—Oh, ho! then it will 'be so with us when we are here.'"

From this moment the future and the present author became extremely communicative, and the piece was apparently going on very prosperously, when suddenly one of the discontented actors entered the room, shrugged up his shoulders, and ejaculated "The linnets are beginning."

"The linnets!" said Vivid: "pray, might I ask, sir, what they may be?"

"How! don't you know?" he replied: "why, they are small birds who make a chirping noise, and are the sure harbingers of that great, awful bird, the goose."

This word, so "hissing hot," as Falstaff says, and never yet misunderstood by any histrionic adventurer, sent our alarmed and irritable bard (another Sir Fret-

ful), half wild, to the side-scenes. There, hearing the storm increase, he grew more desperate, and, rushing back into the room, began vehemently to abuse the vitiated taste of the public—"The scum that riseth upwards when the nation boils."

In vain our héro attempted to console him. His rage was so unbounded, that when an actor, who had just come off the stage, approached and gave him joy—

"Joy of what?" he muttered in reply, at the same time stamping and working up more and more snuff.

"Why," continued the would-be comforter, "the piece is rallying, and the whole of the last scene was received with shouts of applause and laughter."

"Oh!—what, I'm entertaining them?—I'm amusing the savages, am I? Mark my words—they shall not enjoy that scene another night—no—I'll cut it out!"

However, this threat was never carried into execution; for the storm soon commenced again, and on that very night the piece "died," and never afterwards "made any sign."

Notwithstanding this tumultuous scene, Vivid's *caecities scribendi* raged stronger than ever:—he felt he had been seated in the grand theatrical *sanctum sanctorum*:—and though one dramatist's manuscript might smell of sulphur and brimstone, it was no reason why another's should display similar *satanic* signs. Besides, after all, there was some moral gratification in being the author of a d—n drama; for, on the dropping of

the curtain, having passed from behind the scenes into the front, he saw, in the boxes and the lobbies, more merry countenances, and heard more joyous expressions, than he had ever witnessed after a first night's successful performance. How satisfactory to make so many friends happy!

On his return to the Gloucester coffee-house, honest Sam approached him in high glee, saying—

“ I have good news, sir.—Lord Carisbrook and family arrived this evening at his lordship's house in Grosvenor-square.”

“ And what then?—what's that to me?”

“ I thought you would like to know, sir.”

“ What! when I told you I should even request my father to preserve a total silence on that subject!”

“ True; I forgot, sir: I beg pardon; but one of the servants, an old acquaintance of mine, getting down from the Southampton coach, I thought there was no harm in our having a little *chit chat.*”

“ None—provided you confined it to yourselves.”

Here the conversation terminated.

Next morning, dropping in at Hookham's, our hero met Lord Orville. He had lately, after a courtship of only one month, married Miss Ancaster, a young heiress; and he and his lady being about to give a grand house-warming at their new mansion, his lordship very civilly invited Vivid, who, more from professional than pleasurable motives, accepted the invitation.

The conversation taking a literary turn, Lord Orville inquired about the success of a very celebrated Annual, and particularly wished to know whether a short poem and two sonnets introduced in it, signed X. Y., had not been much read and admired.

"I don't know about their having been much admired," said a little, pert stander-by (one of the conductors of said Annual), "but I fear, I very much fear they have been greatly read."

"*Fear! fear* they have been greatly read?" interrogated his lordship, with evident symptoms of paternal feeling.

"To be sure. Why, *our* Annual has literally sold fourteen thousand copies, and therefore, next time, let X. Y. publish his poems and sonnets either in some obscure work, or in his own name; then he will not be exposed; for, as the butchers say, 'Who'll buy, who'll buy?' he, he, he!"

"Why, you speak as if you knew the author, sir." "

"No; but I guess he's one of those with whom a little wit goes a great way—some man of rank or fashion; and wishing no harm to such harmless personages, tell X. Y. (for I suspect you really know him) if he will thus continue writing in works which are *secure* of being read, why, he will inevitably meet Obadiah's fate."

"And what was that?"

"Vide Tristram Shandy: 'Obadiah persisted in the thing, and *the mule threw him!*' he, he, he!"

So saying, he made, as he thought, a triumphant exit; whilst Lord Orville and Vivid, treating his insolent and coarse remarks with the contempt they deserved, walked away together; and the same subject still occupying their conversation, the former jestingly proposed that they should start a *real Animal*, on a somewhat similar principle to the "Loves of the Plants;" and he whimsically proposed calling the hero "Flos Adonis;" the heroine "Venus Navel-wort;" a foppish suitor, "Dandelion;" an old maid, "Virgin Stock;" a toading lord-hunter, "Candy Tuft;" a four-in-hand Jebu, "Catchfly;" and a low attorney, "Devil-in-a-bush." "Edited by Paul Poppy." Vivid laughed, but said he was afraid the town would vote the idea too absurd. "Granted," replied his lordship; "but, still, absurdity *sometimes* has its admirers."

The appointed evening for the housewarming having arrived, every room soon overflowed with fashionable, but, at the same time, heterogeneous company; for as the bride and bridegroom were unknown to each other six weeks ago, so, at present, they were not only strangers to a great part of each other's acquaintances, but many of the visitors actually did not know the persons of their host and hostess.—As a proof, the Marchioness of Mullygrub took it into her head that his lordship was Mr. * * * *, the author of the last

d—d dramatic piece ; and, notwithstanding various explanatory attempts on his part, she went on condoling with him on his distressing and (to use her own delicate expression), *degrading exit to Pandemonium*. But the dowager Duchess of Toddleton was guilty of even a greater mistake ; for she asked Lady Orville herself, in a sort of confidential whisper, whether *before* or *after* marriage his lordship had discovered that his *cara sposa* had false calves and a glass eye.

Struck dumb with astonishment and indignation, her ladyship made no reply ; and the old duchess waddled away, saying—" Well ! at any rate, there is no scandalous story without some foundation."

But to return to our hero. Being necessarily separated from the only person he knew (the donor of the *fête*), he found his situation, even in this fashionable squeeze, rather desolate and *triste*.

In this state he strolled into the ball-room, where, being joined by a stranger, equally a fellow-sufferer with himself, they entered into conversation.—This person, a splenetic old gentleman, ridiculed all the visitors as they passed ; and in the hope of reforming, or, at any rate, diversifying the society usually met with in these parties, proposed that the confectioners and cooks—the Gunters and the Jarrings—should prepare the *company* as well as the *provisions*. Vivid smiled, and exclaimed—" Prepare the company ?"

" Ay," continued old Crabtree : " is it not as easy

to make a little beau as' a large tribe?—a woman of fashion, as a whipped syllabub?—or a purse-proud citizen, as calf's foot jelly?—and then we should have the best parties on the best terms, for they'd talk no nonsense, and be removed with the fragments."

Vivid laughed, and a host of danciers commencing a new rattling *gallopade*, the stranger, in the same grumbling tone, remarked that the giddy throng should remember the hasty style in which these new houses were run up, and that though the floor would neither crack nor yawn when fashionable loungers walked through a waltz, or glided through a quadrille, yet even a stont oaken floor could scarcely support all this stamping and trampling.—“Observe,” he continued, “I rock as if in a ship or in a cradle.”

“ So do I,” quoth Vivid; when, at the same moment, a crash, followed by terrific shrieks, was heard. At first, it was hoped that the latter arose from false alarin; but the melancholy truth was soon revealed, and the lower part of the room instantaneously assuming the form of an inclined plane, all was consternation and dismay. Of course, every body now rushing to the upper part, the pressure became almost insupportable. Vivid and his companion, like the rest, rushed into the crowd; and the first object he beheld, and, to his astonishment and horror, in a complete state of insensibility, was Lady Henrietta.

The sight inspiring him with tenfold energy, he bore

her from the scene of danger, and supporting her down the stairs, fortunately met Lord Orville at the bottom, who ordered a servant to show them into a room, where, by the aid of restoratives, she soon partially revived. Vivid, dreading she should feel annoyed at thinking herself under any obligation to a man who had, in fact, been forbidden her father's house, modestly retired. But the idea that she had been rescued by some generous stranger flashing across her mind, she earnestly applied to the attendant for information, who left the room, and, returning with our hero, said—"Here, madam, is the gentleman."

When Lady Henrietta saw who was her preserver, a relapse had nearly proved the result; but after a long pause and much effort, she contrived to mutter a few grateful expressions; the reply to which consisted in his avowing that he claimed no merit for merely having performed his duty.

At length, having gradually recovered, she said—

"I hope your good father is well, Mr. Vivid."

"He was, I thank you, Lady Henrietta, when I last heard from him."

"Pray, may I ask, did he communicate any particular Ryde intelligence?"

"None, madam, except, what I trust you have the power of contradicting, that Captain Morden had not been heard of since he sailed."

"Oh, yes; I have received one letter from him,

dated 'from sea ;' but the place of his destination still remaining unknown, I can give no information as to his return."

" May nothing delay it ! and when the event does take place, if my humble wishes prevail, you will both be as happy as you expect and deserve to be."

These words were scarcely uttered before Mrs. and Miss Almack entered the room, who consequentially stated, that they should not have known where to find Lady *Morden* (with strong emphasis) but for the candid communication of Lord Orville.

" Candid !" interrogated Lady Henrietta, blushing, and with difficulty restraining her tears.

" To be sure," rejoined the sarcastic dowager ; "and, thank fortune, we are not obliged to this chivalrous gentleman for *our* escape. No—we owe it to our own exertions. However, no time, madam, is to be lost : your carriage stands next in the rank ; and if your father should hear of the accident before you return home, you are aware that such will be his agitation and alarm——"

The truth and justice of this observation instantly excited Lady Henrietta's filial feelings ; and once more, in very pointed terms, thanking Vivid for his generous and disinterested conduct, she curtsied, and hastened towards the carriage, into which, now all danger was over, Count Mounoir was waiting to hand her. Arriving at Lord Carisbrook's, the accident and escape were described, but her preserver's name was artfully

concealed; because the Almack party did not choose that Vivid should in the slightest degree rise in his lordship's estimation. Still, however, they could not prevent his rising in another person's estimation—no, nor, to a certain extent, in his own.

On Vivid's return home, his gratification was soon diminished by the recollections of "existing circumstances," and these caused him to sink into a gloomy and desponding state; when Sam Alltact, rather *malapropos*, entered with a black-edged card, inviting his master to the funeral of a deceased acquaintance, an eminent young artist, named Gilmans, who, never having been an R. A., but simply an engraver of extraordinary genius, was not to be buried under the dome of St. Paul's, but in a village churchyard.

Vivid could not help remarking to a brother mourner, that, in his opinion, the profession of a painter was as much overrated as that of an engraver was underrated: "for," he added, "what real and unprejudiced connoisseur, while contemplating Woollett's Roman Edifices from Claude, and Sir Robert Strange's Titian's Mistress from Titian, with many others, would not acknowledge, that the copy in many instances so rivalled, if not surpassed, the original, that it became a decided question, which artist ought to carry off the palm?"

"Or, at any rate," cried an odd accordant theatrical companion, "the connoisseur might say, with Shakpeare,

• Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?'"

"There is no doubt that in any school of painting," continued our hero, "such men as Reynolds, West, and Lawrence, cannot be too much upheld whilst living, or lauded and regretted when dead. There is likewise Wilkie—another Hogarth—"

"I beg your pardon," rejoined the theatrical gentleman; "but till I can forget the blunderbuss fired from the upsetting coach, the cobweb over the poor's-box, and the gay parson and undertaker at the harlot's funeral, I cannot allow of the comparison. Besides, I admire Hogarth for another reason: did he consider an engraver's to be an *infra-dig.* profession?—No, for he was the engraver of *his own works.*"

"True," replied Vivid; "and other painters have been engravers. But to the point: look at the variety of the exquisite engravings in the Annuals; and having compared them with the large, coarse, *mindless* pictures in—what may be called another *annual*—the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, then say, whether you do not prefer the distinct delicate touches of a well-directed *burin*, to the broad, trowel-like splashings of an ill-directed painting-brush?"

"I do; and whilst I bow down to the excellency of such a portrait as that of Charles the First, by Vandyke, or that of Robin Goodfellow, by Sir Joshua, *cum multis aliis* by painters of the same pre-eminent description—ay—and also whilst I greatly admire numerous pictures still annually exhibited by highly talented living artists, I ask, if I am not to speak

my mind relative to that class of painting, which might pass muster outside the inns at Dartford, or Hounslow, or _____. However, ‘the lion preys not upon carcasses,’ and, therefore, I will leave these canvass-spoilers to the judgment of those, who will show them in their proper light, viz. the hanging committee.”

The funeral being concluded, they returned to town, Vivid agreeing with his odd companion in leaving the canvass-spoilers to the *hanging committee*.



CHAPTER V.

A spoiled child—A long visit and a long home—Stage dagger and red flame—Latulier's club and “nem. con. egad”—Change of scene and climate, and mutual joy at parting.

To return to Lord Carishrook and his family.—Lady Henrietta's spirits not having been improved by the late *rencontre* at Lord Orville's, she was compelled to ascribe her present unusual dejection to the effects of fright arising from the accident. Her affectionate father fully believing this to be the case, sent for a physician, who, amongst other remedies, prescribed one not so easily to be procured—cheerful and entertaining company. Lord Carishrook spared no pains in searching for this remedy; and, by way of specimen, invited an old Isle of Wight friend, Lady Pamper, who unexpectedly brought with her a person then scarcely known to his lordship, her son Sir Peter, otherwise Sir *Pet* Pamper.

Mamma's “spoiled darling,” instead of proving the “dear anodyne” she described him, was soon voted a wholesale *dose of disagreeables* by all the party. As an instance: when he dropped any thing whilst his mother was in the room, he knew she would fly to pick it up; so, in her absence, if Lady Henrietta or

Miss Almack declined, on a similar occasion, performing the same office, he would pout and sulk for the whole evening. Every thing offended him; even illness, which other patients deemed a misfortune, he considered an affront. Then, again, in argument, the "pretty dear" must have it all his own way; for, by Lady Pamper's account, the slightest contradiction brought on one of his bilious attacks; and though, lately, when his mother's house was broken open in the night, he only laughed on hearing that the thieves had carried off all the "old lady's silks and satins;" yet, on finding they had likewise decamped with his gold snuff-box and his marmoset, he abused her for her gross negligence, and sobbed like an infant.

On some of these occasions, particularly when he complained of being nervous, Lady Pamper would endeavour to soothe him by comparing his disorder to that most shocking of all modern ones—dyspepsia.

"Psha!" he replied; "show me what man's life can be more luxurious than your dyspeptic's; who, in the first place, may boast of having at length discovered the 'perpetual motion,' since, from breakfast to bedtime, his tongue not only engrosses all the *talk* and all the *tuck*, but—"

"Lord, my dear! these are the poor patient's two bad signs; for can he resist dwelling on his own complaints, and giving way to his false appetite—"

"Nonsense! then, what appetite am I to give way

to? I, who have none at all! no; and, I'll tell you what, ma'am, if you are so bard-bearted as not to pity me, somebody else shall — at any rate, I can buy pity."

Thus he continued to annoy, till at length he proved so peculiarly irritating and unwholesome a companion to Lord Carisbrook himself, that, at the end of the week, having, in consequence, incurred a slight fit of the gout, he gave strong *departure hints*; but, though it may always be easy to get a certain class of visitors into a house, it is not always so easy to get them out again; and this Lord Carisbrook knew from various precedents, but particularly from the following one, long since communicated to him by an old acquaintance.

Lord * * * *, dining with a friend, met at his table a stranger, who, on the party breaking up, not having been able to procure a carriage, was about to walk, when Lord * * * * politely offered to carry him as far as his own house, close to which, it appeared, was the hotel where the stranger resided. The offer was gratefully accepted, and the "unknown" proving on the way rather an agreeable companion, his lordship, on alighting, invited him in; when, after partaking of a *petit soupe*, and the weather being snowy and tempestuous, his lordship's new acquaintance was requested to stay all night. He did stay—and many nights—ay, many months, and many years afterwards, for he stayed, *contra bonos mores*, till he was moved out, not in his lordship's, but in another carriage, and to another *very* long home.

The first time the darling met with any annoyance was one night, when he had gone to bed early, in consequence of nervous sensations, produced by having eaten too much buffalo's head. Soon, however, overcome by sleep, he had sunk into a sort of feverish doze, when he was roused by loud shrieking, and a cry of "fire!"

The noise proceeded from the housekeeper's room, where, it appeared, amongst other guests invited to a "High Life Below Stairs" party, was Sam Alltaet. He had been asked by the *valet* before mentioned; and in his (Sam's) endeavours to render himself entertaining and conspicuous, he had sworn that if Lady Henrietta's maid refused to give him a kiss, he would instantly kill himself; and, to their astonishment and horror, he *did* kill himself; for they, not suspecting the dagger he used was a stage-dagger, and, after two or three deep and desperate stabs, seeing him fall, struggle, and cease to breathe, naturally supposing him to be dead, shrieked aloud; but, Tom Thumb-like, he immediately resuscitating, they also revived. Had he stopped here, no harm would have ensued; but persisting in the "two morning guns" system, he expounded the secrets of his Promethean, and displayed so much red flame, that it at length ignited the curtains, table-cloth, and sofa, and the whole party rushed to the door, crying out, "Fire, fire!" and speedily afterwards the watchmen knocking and rattling, Sir Pet, wild, or rather blind with alarm, jumped out of bed, and bolted,

chemise, into old Mrs. Almack's chamber—some say (*horresco referens!*) into the dowager's bed; but, in the present age, as even such an insinuation might injure this, our hitherto correct publication, we here at once drop the curtain.

Owing to the activity of the servants and neighbours, the flames, however, were soon subdued, and the house escaped without receiving any damage; but not so poor Sam Alltaet; for, by order of Lord Carisbrook, he was taken to the watch-house, where he remained till next morning, when, fortunately, for want of sufficient evidence, he was discharged.

The next annoyance to Sir Pet took place a few days afterwards. Count Montnoir having often described the pleasant society he met with at Latulier's club, where he had long been a member, Lady Pamper one day told him that she would allow him to have the honour of proposing her son, and added, that Sir Peter insisted on his being nominated immediately. The count would have declined the honour; for he knew if so great a bore, such a *cock-unendurable* were elected, poor Latulier might at once say to his club, “*Bon repos for ever!*” Lord Carisbrook, however, being prevailed upon to back Lady Pamper's request, the count promised to propose him on the next balloting-day. This promise he performed; but, at the same time, “to make assurance doubly sure,” and aware that two black balls excluded, he not only coolly put in one

himself, but he applied to a seconder, whom he knew would put in another. Having thus previously provided for their lovely victim, both mover and seconder artfully panegyrised Sir Pet as a man of honour, and a first-rate *convivial*, when, to their great surprise and confusion, on the balloting-box being opened, the president declared that not one member of the thirteen present had voted in the new candidate's favour—*all black balls!* and after such a display of the genuine friendship and impartial description, given by those who had privately repudiated the very man whom they had publicly recommended, the result was inevitable—the mover and seconder walked out, to prevent being turned out.

The truth was, the chief cause of this *new com.* exclusion originated in the unpopularity of the count himself; who being strongly suspected of certain gambling irregularities, the members took this opportunity of, in some degree, marking their sense of his conduct.

Sir Pet's rage and indignation knew no bounds; but he gained relief in the usual way, *i. e.* by laying the fault on his mother, and whom he thus attacked—

“ If I am so disagreeable as to be voted unfit for society, why, madam, did not you make me otherwise? I say (*stampin*g *violently*), answer me—why did you not make me agreeable?”

Lady Pamper, of course, acknowledged he had every reason for complaining; but Lord Carisbrook deemed

the count's style of manœuvring an excellent piece of Jack Tar humour; and as to the club's opinion of him, why, he told his friend Montnoir (for so he should still call him) that he hoped henceforward he would be above mixing with such a set of caballers.

This new annoyance converted the "darling's" slight nervous attack into a sort of hypochondriacal one; and a physician having been called in, he at once recommended change of scene and a warmer climate. Upon which hint, Sir Pet spoke to his mother, and ordered her immediately to prepare for their departure to Italy; when, on her humbly inquiring in what part of Italy he proposed residing, he at first said Florence; then, altering his mind, he proposed Naples; and soon after, again *weathercocking* it, he named Palermo.

Naturally, he would have preferred any fellow-traveller to a maternal one; but the word which now stood first in his vocabulary was *nurse*, and of all nurses, so near a relative, he considered, would prove the best; for she would not only incessantly listen to his complaints, and devote her whole soul towards promoting their cure; but when he found himself well enough to do without her, he knew she would not for a moment think of giving him any further trouble.

Such was this filial *number one*; and as the old lady was slow in her preparations, he requested that Lord Carisbrook's servants might aid in starting them off. "Oh ho!" quoth the jolly old peer, on Sir Pet's re-

tiring—"Here, John, Harry, 'William! hasten to pack up all Lady Pamper and her son's travelling apparatus; and then order my coachman—mark, *my* coachman—to get ready the barouche and four; and having driven ~~over~~ much *regretted* visitors to Dover, tell him not to leave them till he sees mamma and her pest of a pet safe on board the Calais packet."

He then hastened to Lady Pamper's apartment (where he found her shivering with cold, the "darling" having taken full possession of the fire-place), and informed them that the carriage was at the door; and though they were thus about to part on the very day in which her ladyship entered into her sixtieth year, his lordship could not so far command his courtesy as to wish his old friend "*many happy returns.*"



CHAPTER VI.

A new theatrical manufacture—"Nothing if *not* critical, and nothing *if* critical"—Row—Duel—And Court of Chancery.

For some time past the theatrical part of the metropolis had been thrown into a state of forced *hot-house* delight, in consequence of Mr. Candide having brought out a star of his own manufacturing—and the "Fatal Marriage" being the play in which she made her first appearance, the only question in dramatic and fashionable circles now was, "Have you seen the new Isabella?"

"The town, as usual, met it in full cry;
The town, as usual, knew no reason why."

On the fourth night of her performance in London (for she had previously acted in the country), not having been able to get in sooner, Vivid and one of his Temple fellow-students took their seats in the dress circle, when the new actress (who certainly boasted of no personal recommendations, except being sufficiently tall, and displaying a pair of sparkling blue eyes) appeared. She had scarcely uttered ten lines before the

Templar became so enraptured and intoxicated that he whispered to his companion, "I would give a hundred pounds to kiss the tip of her dear little finger;" and at the end of Act I., after having applauded and belaboured out "bravo" till he became as black in the face as Othello, he exclaimed very authoritatively, "I only ask whether Isabella was ever properly conceived or played before*?"

"I don't know," rejoined Vivid. "I may be wrong, but I never conceived that any actress would convert the tender, broken-hearted Isabella into a harsh, irritable——"

"Irritable!"

"Ay—such is her representation, or rather misrepresentation, of the character."

"Well, she is right," continued the *blatant* student, "she is right! For if you had been thus provoked by a cruel father, and thus pestered by a pack of insolent duns, would not *you* be irritable, Mr. Vivid? Oh! she is all nature! and then her poetry!"

"*Her* poetry!—you mean the author's."

"Pooh! I mean the poetry of her acting."

"Ha! ha!—Why, I have heard of a performer's

* As scarcely one person out of a thousand understands the difference between good and bad acting, a tragic performer has the best chance of (what is called) *making the hit*; whilst, in consequence of the increased number of male and female musical judges, a singer has decidedly the worst chance.

poverty of acting, but I never heard• of the *poetry* of acting. Ha! ha!—Do, pray, explain."

" Why—I—I—in fact—I only know, I read the expression in the newspapers."

" Oh, well then—*vous avez raison, mon ami*—but hush! the fourth act begins."

In this act, notwithstanding the author makes Isabella say—

" Biron died,
Still to my loss, at Candy—there's my *hope*."

yet *nature* (for so we will call the new star) after recognising him, soon expressed herself by action so tenderly—nay (in consequence of the misleading and misjudged applause of "the followers at the lower end of the hall"), so warmly, towards her resuscitated lord, that our insane Templar was actually about to cry *encore*, when a gray-haired gentleman, who wore those true symbols of criticism, spectacles, tapped him on the shoulder, and said—

" Recollect, young gentleman, that 'fair play is a jewel,' and if by her action she displays such tenderness towards *one* husband, she should display equal tenderness towards the *other* husband; and then each of them might say with the German dramatist—' A sudden thought strikes me—let us vow an eternal friendship, and share her between us.'"

" Well, sir!" rejoined the young applauder, quite irritably, "as some proof of her real merit, I suppose you will admit that no performer ever brought a fuller house."

" Certainly, except one performer."

" And pray who was that one?"

" Why, the bottle conjuror."

Vivid laughed heartily; and his companion, somewhat confounded, no longer disturbed the box—at least not till the dropping of the curtain, when, of course, he again made himself conspicuous. However, here he was "not alone dishonoured;" for, the tragedy being concluded, the usual remarks on these infatuating occasions were heard throughout the audience. "What a splendid, magnificent actress! but what a dull, heavy play!" Then the author, poor Southern! immediately became responsible for all the ineffective acting of the evening; for the fact is, my Lord John, my Lady John, and common John, feel they have not altogether been entertained, and therefore, as they cannot even suspect the "goddess of their idolatry" of having been the cause of their disappointment, Isabella, which, for above a century, in the hands of Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Siddons, has been deemed one of the most interesting and pathetic plays on the stock list, is now, for the first time, half d—d; and when *Nature* selects Otway and Shakspeare for the next hard office, Belvi-

dera and Juliet will be voted as dull and dissatisfactory as poor Isabella *.

Vivid, still having the privilege of going behind the scenes, sauntered into the green-room, where this creature more divine than human had brought another full house—crowds of dazzled, *success-hunting* lords and ladies were trying to drink more deeply the sweet music of her voice, and likewise to dwell on the bright effusions of *her own* poetical mind, when, after waiting on the tiptoe of expectation for some minutes, to their surprise and discomfiture, she uttered only these few words, viz., “Are the scalloped oysters ready?” This question having been put to her dresser, who at that moment entered the green-room, she replied to it in the affirmative, and added:

“They have just been sent, ma’am, with the negus, quite nice and hot, from the Piazza Coffee-house.”

Away tripped Melpomene, accompanied by a vulgar old aunt, to enjoy more substantial food than on that evening (at least) she had hitherto partaken of; but, prithee, do not blame her, temperate reader! if one beautiful woman has one fancy, and another another,

* However, as these novices “come like shadows, so depart,” we may venture to quote a pun, which, though old to us, is probably new to others. “Isabella this season—Was a bella the next.”

why may not our young, amiable actress exclaim with Cowslip,

"Oh! were I a goddess, give me—a roast duck *!"

Soon after *nature* had left the green-room, all in it were roused by hearing some of the audience kicking up a furious theatrical *row*.—"Where's your card?"—"There's my card!"—"Turn him out!"—"Throw him over!" Now is it not singular that these heroical expressions should be vociferated by persons seated at a safe and comfortable distance from the scene of action, whereas not once in a thousand times are we gratified by the adjunct and chivalrous spectator exclaiming, "*I'll turn you out!*"—"I'll throw you over!"

Whilst this disturbance was going on in front, a less public though more serious quarrel (such is the usual result of full nights) was taking place in a private box over the stage; and to Vivid's great surprise and mortification, perceiving that Lord Orville was one of the opposing parties, he thought it his duty immediately

* During my long theatrical career, I have encountered nearly thirty of these *manufactured* lions and lionesses. Amongst others, I am old enough (unluckily) to remember an honest, ingenious razor-maker in Pall-Mall, named Savigny, bringing crowded houses in Zanga, and other characters, whilst Garrick, the most justly celebrated actor that ever trod the British stage, was performing to nearly empty benches. *Oh! semper instabile vulgus!*

to try whether any interference on his part could prevent farther misunderstanding; and having entered the box, his arrival proved most opportune, for he found his lordship in such high altercation with an Irish gentleman *Bacchi plenus*, that they were actually on the point of breasting each other, when he rushed between them. The event that had given rise to the quarrel was also particularly interesting and distressing to our hero. Lady Henrietta was the cause. She and Lady Orville had been left alone, whilst his lordship went to ascertain whether the carriage was ready; and having in his haste not quite closed the door, the above son of Erin, not exactly for the first time in his life, committed a blunder, and reeled into the wrong box. He soon, however, admitted he had made a mistake, for the box he had left was Sir Charles B***'s; but he vowed it was so agreeable an error, that he could not resist making the most of it; and in all love affairs, "importunity and opportunity" being his motto, he coolly took Lady Henrietta by the hand, and attempted forcibly to kiss it.

In vain did she struggle, and in vain did Lady Orville remonstrate; when, his lordship returning, an explanation of course ensued. But the Irish colonel (for such he was) being solely under the dominion of the rosy god, his language was so overbearing and personal, that nothing but Vivid's prompt appearance could have prevented the last extremity, a blow. Mat-

ters, however, had gone much too far to admit of an amicable termination; and Lord Orville having conducted the ladies home, he privately sent for our hero, and placing his honour in his hands, requested him to take the usual measures adopted on these occasions.

Vivid, though not an experienced second, knew something of its duties; and the challenge having been given on the part of Lord Orville, and accepted by his antagonist, the meeting was fixed for seven o'clock next morning, near Chalk-Farm.

On arriving on the ground, the friend of the colonel, Captain O'K——, proved to be quite at home on the occasion. He brought with him his own duelling pistols, and measured the distance at nine paces. To this Vivid objected, calling it a murderous distance, and asserting in a loud, manly tone, that if it were persisted in, he would leave the ground. The experienced man of arms shrugged up his shoulders, and exclaimed—

“ Well! as the colonel with either of these *beauties* could snuff a candle at twenty paces, fix your own number, jewel.”

Vivid named fourteen, and at this distance, on a given signal, it was agreed that both should fire together. They did so; and to Captain O'K——’s great surprise, neither party had received the slightest injur,

Vivid, being assured that his friend's honour was satisfied, proposed that the matter should here terminate; but his co-second insisted they should still keep their ground, and not separate till the public were satisfied.

"The *public* satisfied!" exclaimed Vivid. "Sir," (*addressing the principal*) "I simply ask you, if to please the public, Messrs. Smith, Tomkins, Jenkins, &c. his lordship and yourself are to go on firing at each other like pigeon-shooters till one or both fall? and on such an occasion, too, on such a hasty provocation! You cannot, colonel, deny, that in consequence of inciety you acted very indecorously; and now, having received his lordship's fire, can your honour be in the slightest degree compromised by your acknowledging your error?—You, who, I know, have gained real laurels in *real* fields of honour—can your reputation be aided by the destruction of a wronged honourable gentleman, and simply because it is the wish of Messrs. Smith, Tomkins, Jenkins—?"

Here the colonel could not help smiling, and at once frankly confessed he was *very* sorry for having involuntarily insulted two unoffending ladies. On this, Vivid recommended that the parties should shake hands; when, on that ceremony having taken place, they all left the ground completely satisfied—even the captain confessing that, after all, it was not a case sufficiently important for a duel in "*down-right earnest*."

Whilst this scene was passing near Chalk Farm, a more distressing one was taking place at Lord Orville's house; for Lady Henrietta, looking upon herself as the cause of the challenge, remained in a state bordering on distraction, and for the first time in her life she blamed Vivid—highly blamed him; for she said, instead of encouraging the contest, he ought to have taken every means in his power to have prevented it. Lady Orville, though nearly overcome with alarm, attempted to console her, but in vain; in her present agitated state, seeing every thing through a false medium, she exclaimed—"Oh! if my kind, brave, noble cousin be killed, I shall for ever call myself his murderer."

At this instant a loud knock was heard at the street-door; and Lady Orville, knowing it was her husband's, clasped her trembling fellow-sufferer in her arms, and cried—

"He's safe! he's safe!"

Still, however, poor Henrietta listened with a distrustful ear; when, to her unspeakable gratification, in a few moments Lord Orville stood before them, and warm embraces and congratulations over, he presented Vivid. Both ladies received him with marked coldness. This being perceived by his lordship, he took him by the hand, and advancing towards them, exclaimed—"Behold not only the defender of my honour, but of my life!" and then narrating his gallant

and gentlemanly conduct during the whole of the duel, such tears of penitence and gratitude flowed down Henrietta's and her companion's cheeks, that Vivid was compelled to conceal his agitation by turning aside. Soon after he took his leave; but Lord Orville would not allow him to depart till he promised to return and partake of a family dinner. Of course the invitation was accepted; and the conversation at table turning on theatrical topics, he proved himself such an humorous adept in the art, such an hilarious detector of histrionic *conjurors*, that he delighted the whole party. One anecdote afforded particular amusement.

On Vivid being asked whether love-making or quarrelling predominated behind the scenes—"Oh! by far the latter,"—he replied; "however, I must say, your true wrangling brethren of the sock and buskin soon make it up again, and in the height of their dispute mix kind, familiar expressions with angry ones;—such as, 'Tis a lie, my dear Tom, &c.' As a proof—not a week ago, a deputy-manager, after having written to a monarch-player, and threatened, if he did not return to his duty and complete his engagement, an action would forthwith be brought, he (the hostile manager) thus curiously concluded his letter—

"And, *wishing you success*, I remain
"truly yours,' &c."

Though this odd recital amused all, Lady Henrietta

was the least gratified, and with reason; for she felt a new and additional cause of regret for the loss of so estimable and agreeable an acquaintance.

She also felt sorry when her carriage was announced; and was even still more annoyed at being compelled to relinquish Lord Oryill's offer of accompanying her home. Her motive was obvious. She knew, that in consequence of her father's increased animosity, she dare not invite *another* person to take a seat; and therefore she thought it less mortifying to his feelings to say she preferred returning home alone.

She found Lord Carisbrook waiting her arrival; and he instantly inquired whether she had heard any news relative to Captain Morden? On her replying in the negative, he told her he had that evening received most welcome intelligence from the Admiralty. The Protector had reached its place of destination, the Mediterranean, "all well;" and there was little doubt that in two or three months her gallant and affectionate husband would be restored to her. Our heroine received this news with grateful, though not altogether with unmixed feelings; for certainly the strong excitement of the day at present maintained its ascendancy; but only for the day; for when she received Captain Morden's letter, fully confirming all the particulars related by her father, filial and conjugal duty wholly prevailed, and justly superseded all other considerations.

Vivid, in consequence of the duel and other events, had brought home a quantity of fresh dramatic grist, and was carrying it to his granary, *i. e.* his memorandum-book, when he was interrupted by Sam Alltaet, who entered the room laughing loudly.

“What now?” quoth Vivid.

“Wby, you recollect, sir,” replied Sam, “that having picked up a pocket-book on the ground, which the colonel's second, in his rage and haste, had dropped —”

“I recollect. I ordered you to take it to Captain O'K——'s lodgings, and return it, with my compliments.”

“Well, sir, I obeyed your orders, and on entering the house I never witnessed such a scene of uproar and confusion;—it appeared that on returning from the duel, the captain indulged in his usual mode of getting relief whenever he had at all suffered by over-excitement, *i. e.* by ringing either his sitting-room or bed-chamber bell regularly every four or five minutes; and on this occasion he continued ringing them with such increased fury, that the quiet old landlady told him, that he must either leave off thus for ever disturbing the other lodgers, or instantly quit the house. Having often threatened him before, she now insisted on being obeyed; when, after some remonstrances on his part, finding her inexorable, he consented to leave off ringing the bells, provided he might keep quiet possession. This being agreed to by the good old

lady, all went on peaceably till the evening, when, about nine o'clock, the report of a pistol was heard in his chamber. Every body rushed in, expecting to find he had destroyed himself; when, to their astonishment, he stood erect before them, and said, coolly, ‘ By the powers! if I mayn’t ring a bell, what better noise than this can I make, honeys, just to get a little *attendance*? ’’

This anecdote had scarcely been related, when the owner of the pocket-book calling to return thanks, Vivid was agreeably disappointed in finding that his co-second was by no means an unpleasant person. Barring a too nice susceptibility of honour, and an over-love for the *duello punctilio*, he proved to be a rational, straight-forward, though, at the same time, certainly (what is vulgarly called) “a queer honey.”

Vivid, having received a letter from his father, requesting to know how his long-pending chancery-suit had gone on, called one afternoon on Mr. Latitat, the doctor’s attorney, in the Temple, who having some years ago accepted “the “best commission in his majesty’s gift—a commission of bankruptcy,” the doctor strangely imagined that because he was a poor lawyer he must be an honest one, and therefore employed him; and for fifteen years he had conducted the cause of Nightshade and Vivid; but so clumsily and dilatorily, that our medical practitioner began to discover a client might as easily be ruined by ignorance and indolence, as by dishonesty and chicanery. Certainly

that Mr. Latitat's office proved to be another "chaos come again" was evident from what took place on our hero entering his chambers.

"Is Mr. Latitat within?" demanded Vivid.

"No, sir," replied the clerk; "he's at his country house, in the north of England."

"How! so far off!—and in term time!—Why, zounds!—"

"Oh, sir! what we legal agriculturists call the 'north of England' is Camden-town—he! he!—and as 'tis past four o'clock, he'll soon return.—Look, here he comes!"

"Well, Mr. Latitat," said Vivid; "some move at last, I hope, in the cause of Nightshade and Vivid?"

"No! but I trust there soon will be, for it only stands about eight or ten off in the cause-list."

"Indeed! so near the top! Come, this news will delight my father."

"Oh, yes, it ought! for if ever client had reason to be satisfied, it is your good father, for whom we have so fagged night and day, that we scarcely have now any other client left."

At this moment Mr. Latitat was summoned out of the room; and an evening newspaper lying on the table, Vivid took it up, and almost the first article that met his eyes was—"The Vice-Chancellor's Court (*this day*)."—Anxious to know if the account "re-

ported progress," he commenced reading it; when, to his astonishment, he saw the following curious passage:—

"Owing to the non-attendance of the attorney and the principal counsel for the defendant, the long-pending cause of Nightshade and Vivid was struck out, and ordered to be placed at the bottom of the list."

Here was the "law's certain uncertainty" with a vengeance, and Vivid knew enough of Chancery to be well aware, that before the cause got to the head of the list again, the plaintiff, defendant, and most of the other parties might die; and he also knew that barristers (who, like managers, say, "*No money returned*") can only be kept alive by refreshers, and that new affidavits, new consultations, and new briefs, though "sport" to some, would prove "death" to others. Our hero, impressed with this notion, left "chaos," never to "come again."

As trifles have often proved the cause of war and other grand events, so a trifle originally created this awful chancery suit. Dr. Vivid, having been bequeathed by his brother an annuity of eight hundred pounds, secured on money in the funds, and payable half-yearly by a strange, crazy old, retired captain of a merchant-ship, residing at a seaport in Wales, wrote to inform him of his said brother's bequest, and added, that since the testator had been accustomed to be paid by a bill at three months, the present annuity-holder had drawn

his first bill upon him in the same manner, and would thank him to accept and return it as soon as convenient.

The doctor having been in the habit of occasionally reading the correspondence between the captain and his brother, was perfectly acquainted with the annuity-grantor's *hand-writing*, although, by the following curious answer to the letter, the facetious nautical scribe probably was not aware of the fact:—

“ Capt. Nightshade's compliments to Dr. Vivid, and thanks him for his offer of taking a bill at three months, which he would with pleasure return accepted; but Capt. N. has the gout so dreadfully bad in both hands, that he is not at present enabled to say more than that; when he can possibly put pen to paper, Dr. V. shall hear from him. Mean time, he wishes compliments of the season,” &c. &c.

Now, though the doctor, like many others, could make allowances for the strange conduct of what has aptly been called “your *fish-out-of-water* genus,” yet, being certain as to the identity of the hand-writing, and *ergo*, deeming the contents somewhat impertinent, he could not altogether keep his temper, and consequently wrote an angry answer; to which, and another letter, having received no reply, he placed the case in the hands of his attorney, who selfishly entered a distin-

gas on all the dividends, well knowing that such entry would operate like a double-barrelled gun, and produce a second shot, which it soon did, in the shape of an injunction bill; and which shot was followed by two heavier fires, a *discovery* and a *cross bill*, involving as necessary parties three other annuitants, four trustees, and fourteen infants; thus proving that in law, as in love,

*"One suitor to another still succeeds,
And the last *fool* is welcome as the former."*

Certainly the horse-police and other nightly patrol have done much towards preventing numerous depredators from presenting and firing pistols; but surely, while litigious clients and pettifogging lawyers have the power of presenting and firing that battery of twenty-four pounders, *a bill in chancery*, why, the property—ay, and in the end, perhaps, the lives—of some of his majesty's peaceable subjects are not altogether free from the “stand-and-deliver” system*.

Such being the case, and since this court is capable of being rendered one of our most useful and efficient courts, is it not to be hoped that a day may come when a thorough revision and amelioration of our

* During one term, no less than two hundred and forty-two articled clerks were admitted as attorneys of the Court of King's Bench, and upwards of one hundred and twenty in the Court of Common Pleas.

"Prodigious!—Reform it altogether!"

equity laws will be deemed a matter of as great national importance as that chief occupier of the time of our grand *rural Capulets* and *Montagues*, the revision and amelioration of the game laws.



CHAPTER VII.

An insipid lady and *fresh-water* dangers—Friar Tuck—"Isabella" chequered, and *Nature's* second appearance—*Salt-water* dangers—City news—The Duchess of Toddleton's masquerade—Vivid enchanted by a witch—Sir Juniper Jackanape—Captain Morden and the ~~Protector~~—State of affairs at Caversham House.

MISS ALMACK, *par accident* the chief companion of Lady Henrietta, was one of those insipid, milk-and-water beings, who, though they do no harm in the world, yet, according to Mandeville, certainly do no good; and whilst a sympathising friend might have considerably consoled our heroine in her present distressing situation, yet this *still-life* personage, devoting the whole of her mind and time to her piano-forte, poëde, paroquet, quadrilling, eating, drinking, and sleeping, it was evident she could contribute to nobody's comfort but her own. But, still, was this her fault?—was she to blame because nature had given her a heart, which, in point of size, could only have equalled a wren's, and, in the way of animation, was inferior to that of a dormouse? However, having a pretty face, auburn ringlets, beautiful hands and feet, and, what was still more beautiful, great pecuniary expectations,

Letitia Almack did not at all lack admirers. Amongst others was Sir Henry Reefley, a fresh-water sailor, whose boat, the Sprightly, was one of the most splendid on the Thames; and the "joyous spring having suddenly peeped forth and smiled," he proposed commencing the season with an aquatic excursion, or rather *voyage*, as he termed it, to "Eel-pie Island," near Richmond. Of course Miss Almack was to be the Cleopatra of his ~~alley~~; and her mother, Lady Henrietta, Lady Orville, Count Montnoir, and other *élégantes* were to form the rest of the crew. Lord Carishbrook was invited; but he disdainfully refused to mix himself up with a set of umbrella and opera-glass *navigators*.

His lordship, it must be confessed, was actuated by prejudice; for to see six handsome, athletic young rowers dressed in the uniform of their club—light-blue jackets, white trousers, and black caps with gold bands and tassels—was in itself rather a gay and cheering sight; but when to these were added so many elegantly dressed women, aided by the fineness of the day, and followed by a boat containing a band of music, the whole scene was sufficiently showy and exhilarating.

On arriving at the island, the captain took upon himself to order dinner; and here commenced the first little interruption to the pleasures of the day. Miss Almack knew that her admirer was well aware of the two dishes

she most liked—*ergo*, his omitting to order them was deemed a neglect worthy of a tiff-royal. And bere it may not be supererogatory to observe, that it is a sad vulgar error to suppose that Friar Tuck and Co. are only to be found at Guildhall, the inns of court, and other eastern parts of the metropolis. Many people at the west end, and who wear other *gowns* than clerical, legal, or aldermanic ones, are so well versed in the *Almanac des Gourmandes*, that most probably, in addition to sleeves à la gigot, our fashionable fair will shortly sport bonnets à la tête de veau en tortue, or caps à la côtelettes financière.

Dinner over, Mrs. Almack lost not a moment in displaying her *grand talent* before so full a house; but this celebrated *cantatrice* was suddenly interrupted by a boisterous sort of chorus without; and which chorus arose from a number of harsh voices, all in the shape of hymn-chanting, fatherly, motherly, and sucking methodists.

It seemed these puritanical *voyageurs* periodically visited this place in a large steam-boat, and on their landing, they, as usual, made for the back of the island; solely for the purpose of bathing and purifying themselves, and consequently of further impurifying water which had before become deleterious, not only from the remains of that foe to flesh as well as fish, the *gas*, but from the remains of *dyspeptic* eels, dace, and flounders.

This ceremony over, they returned to shore; and having scarcely half dressed themselves, they rushed into the inn, singing

"Oh! oh! oh! there is a time to eat and drink! Oh! oh! oh!" thus marring a series of *mélodies* private music, which would have lasted the whole evening. The landlord remonstrated, but in vain. They knew they were too regular and valuable a set of customers for him to quarrel with, at least for such precarious visitors as Sir Henry Reesley and party, who, consequently perceiving there was no alternative but an immediate retreat, took to their boat and pushed from shore, though at that very moment they had wind and tide against them, and instead of a bright, a dark tempestuous sky.

They had not rowed above two miles beyond Richmond, when the silk awning being soaked through by increasing rain, a gale also having blown up right ahead, and the sun having set for above half an hour, the female part of the company naturally became alarmed, and requested they might seek shelter on shore. The request, of course, was complied with; and a light appearing at the window of a farm-house about a hundred yards from the river, they all landed and approached the hoped-for scene of hospitality and comfort; when the only response they received to their twice ringing the bell was a loud barking from what our female sufferers conceived to be a *pack* of mastiffs. On the third ring they received an answer, and a decisive one!

The fact was, that several robberies having lately

been committed in the neighbourhood, the farmer regularly retired to his chamber with a loaded blunderbuss ; and being always on the watch, and this night seeing, as he thought, a *gang* of burglars in sailors' jackets, he threw up the windows, and presenting arms, warned them to decamp ; but before the supposed banditti could explain, the old farmer's over-loaded blunderbuss (owing to his terror) went off with a tremendous explosion. This was final as to the feminine interest ; and their male companions, in vain endeavouring to check their flight, were forced to follow.



Such were the pleasures of a water party! but where and how were these pleasures to end? If they put on shore at Putney, or Hammersmith, in their present disordered state of dress (for the clothes, feathers, and hair of the fair matiniers were all dripping wet, whilst the white trousers of the male ones were covered with mud), they knew they were liable to be exposed to fresh insults and fresh dangers. They therefore resolved to weather the storm on board; and after rowing all night, they, at last, landed at Vauxhall-bridge about five in the morning; but in such a *dérangé* state, so tottering with exhaustion, looking so wild and baggardly, and altogether displaying such a suspicious appearance, that when the gallant captain called two hackney-coaches, the coachmen only nodded, winked, and kept their station. Still, as the man says in the play, “There is no barm in a guinea;” and half that sum satisfying each, both coaches drew up, and in less than half an hour Lady Henrietta and her companions arrived safely in Grosvenor-square. Here commenced another and a greater storm. Lord Carisbrook having been watching and waiting for his daughter, in a state of the utmost anxiety, the whole night, was so excessively irritated against Sir Henry Reefley and his “cockboat crew,” that he wished—nay, he would vote for a war solely for the purpose of having “such fresh-water lubbers all pressed;” and having embraced his “dear darling

"child" again and again, he, with his usual wild Jack Tar feeling, added—

"Had you been drowned at sea, a veteran sailor might have submitted to the hand of Providence, and in time recovered his lost; but the disgrace of having *my* daughter, and the wife of a K. C. B. stranded on Battersea quicksands, or shipwrecked in Chelsea-reach! Oh! if the lives of his majesty's subjects are to be risked by these *canoe-cockneys*, I say again,

'My sentence is for open war, oh peers!"'

The certainty, however, of his Henrietta's safety soon dispersed all angry clouds, and sunshine smiled again: but not in another quarter; for Sam Alltact having accidentally, the next day, met one of Lord Carisbrook's servants, and heard from him the whole of the particulars, very soon acquainted Vivid with them, who felt most anxious on the subject. He feared that Lady Henrietta would never recover her fright and fatigue; and therefore was as much delighted as surprised, when, on the following Sunday, he met her in Kensington-gardens; and, in addition to the gratification of seeing her look as handsome as ever, he was particularly pleased by her honouring him with a very friendly smile and a curtsy.

About this period our hero had renewed his acquaintance with a fellow-student, whom he had frequently messed with in the Temple-hall, named Oxy-

mel; and who, by his talents and perseverance, had, during the last year, become the editor of a very leading journal. Vivid, though knowing something of the *hundred-horse* power of the daily press, had no idea of its formidable extent, till his friend frankly communicated the secrets of *his* "prison-house." Amongst other proofs, Oxymel informed him that (though in consequence of the new theatrical constellation, "*Nature*," being advertised for that evening in her second part) private boxes had risen fifty per cent., yet he had been able to procure one *gratis* from the manager; and, added the good-natured editor, "If, Vivid, you wish for a seat in it, one is quite at your service." He cheerfully accepted the invitation.

During the performance at night, Oxymel complained there was too much *art* in "*Nature*"; and also objected to her forced attitudinarian efforts. Vivid, therefore, was much surprised to read in his friend's next day's paper that the new actress's Imogen was *even* superior to her Isabella.

Vivid called that morning, and thus addressed his friend:—"It is strange you should differ from *yourself!*—for what is *written* in your own journal is of course —"

"Oh! my paper and myself are much like man and wife," replied Oxymel, smiling—"we often differ; but this article was written by my theatrical critic—an acknowledged free agent; and though, in my

judgment, this new female *balloonist*, who, upheld by literary gas, has mounted to the top of the ladder, must gradually descend—‘ Fine by degrees, and beautifully less,’ Mr. Munster thinks otherwise. *A la bonne heure.* As she is a good girl, and has many relations dependent on her talent, I am glad that my journal (which, by the by, I am vain enough to believe is the creed of three-fourths of its readers) has taken the good-natured side.

Vivid perfectly agreed with him in thinking that a newspaper was the *creed* of most persons who read it, and added—

“ I don’t wonder, therefore, at authors attempting to stop hypercritics’ mouths by filling them with venison and champagne.”

“ You mistake, my friend !”—replied Oxymel; “ such short-sighted policy only recoils; for the liberal—*i. e.* the leading editors—are above being caught by this miserable *Cerberus* system; consequently, when your works are attacked, Vivid, take my advice—ha! ha! ha! —and act as an author did some years ago.”

“ How? in what manner did he act?”

“ Why, having been regularly abused in a *low* weekly journal, long since consigned to the tomb of the *Capulets*, he asked a friend whether he had not better frequently invite the editor to partake of a good dinner and French wines. ‘ Pooh!’ replied his facetious Mentor, ‘ that woif answer your purpose.—No: but

all the money you meant to expend in pampering him with rich viands, *lend* him—mum!—lend it him on his note at three months; then, if he don't take it up (and a hundred to one he does not), you have him snug; for if he still pursues the system of abusing you, do you let John Doe and Richard Roe *pursue* him; and then if he do not promise to *balloon* you to the top of the ladder—you comprehend—let him go on singing with the starling, I can't get out!—ha! ha!"

Our hero joined in his friend's laugh, and was continuing the subject, when a reporter entered with news from the city, where the bulls and the bears, notwithstanding it was a close holiday, Holy Thursday, in spite of bishops and magistrates, went on gambling by wholesale; and such is the predominant love of money in cockney or rather *Cocker* understanding, that if news arrived on the Stock Exchange, that a victorious French invading army had passed Blackheath, the speculators for the account would probably go on bargain-making till the enemy's artillery was heard on Londonbridge. The next intelligence the reporter brought was from the Corn-market; when, upon his observing that trade was very dull that day, Vivid asked what, on this occasion, the word *dull* meant.

"Why," replied Oxymel, "it means that corn is on the decline, and, consequently, that the price of bread is falling. But," he added, "when they report that

the market is *lively*, then 'the price of corn and, of course, bread is rapidly getting up."

"Bravo!" rejoined his friend. "Very *lively* for the poor! But pray, sir, go on:—what other city intelligence?"

"Oh!" answered the reporter, "such disastrous ship-news at Lloyd's!—such long faces amongst the underwriters!—and with reason; for so dreadful a storm has not occurred in that sea for half a century."

"What sea?" inquired Oxymel.

"The Mediterranean; and, in addition to nearly forty merchantmen, two English frigates and a sloop of war are supposed to be wrecked."

"Two English frigates?" anxiously inquired Vivid.
"Do you know their names?"

"The *Euphrosyne* and the *Protector*; and if, as I guess, you are anxious for the fate of some friend on board, I lament to add, that when the two vessels were last seen, they had hoisted signals of distress, and were driving towards the coast of Barbary."

"What! near Algiers?"

"So they report, but I trust—"

"Heavens! poor Captain Morden, and poor Lady Henrietta!—Oh! when I think of her state of agitation and suspense—for bad news travels so swiftly, no doubt she has already heard it—but—yes! we may still encourage hope—strong hope:—such vessels, with

such crews, have often weathered worse hurricanes in worse seas."

"True! in the Baltic, Atlantic—"

Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the French newspapers; and Oxymel read an article confirming the account of the storm in the Mediterranean, but by no means precluding hope: on the contrary, one of the two frigates (though the name was not mentioned) was supposed to have reached Malta. Buoyed up by this cheering account, Vivid took his leave, and hastened to communicate it to Lord Orville.

His lordship had just returned from the Admiralty, where the reports of the extent of the storm were fully verified, yet, as it had abated soon after sunset, it was expected that the next accounts would prove far more favourable; and there was no doubt that one of the frigates, though under jury-masts, had so far weathered the gale, that she was seen not a league from Malta; but neither he nor Lord Carisbrook could ascertain whether it was the *Euphrosyne* or the *Protector*.

Thus, though all was uncertainty, and Lady Morden and her father were particularly shocked and afflicted, yet they did not absolutely despair. As to Mrs. Almack, she professed on the occasion much sorrow and regret; but still made up her mind that

nothing should prevent her going on that evening to the new opera; whilst Miss Almack only yawned, and said,

“ If people will marry sailors, they must be prepared for these natural results! and after all, my dear Henrietta, think if this stormy interest isn’t better than a sea-engagement; for—oh! how shocking!—think of the man’s coming home with only one-third of himself.”

“ Oui,” rejoined Count Montnoir (who secretly rejoiced at the intelligence, from obvious love-and-fortune-hunting motives); “ oui—tink of le grand capitaine hopping about like de fraction of a man!”

The only two who truly sympathized with the distressed, anxious father and daughter were Lord and Lady Orville; except, indeed, our hero, who, being still denied admission at Carisbrook-house, could not have the gratification of personally affording consolation. Many of those, however, who put “generous questions and no answers wait,” called; amongst others, Sir Henry Reefley, whose visit proved a diversion in favour of the old naval peer; for the idea of being pitied by one of the fresh-water heroes threw him into a violent passion, and thus drew off his mind from brooding on the greater evil.

On his return to his hotel, Vivid, as usual, commenced recording all the late events amongst his *memoranda dramatica*; when, before he had inserted one

half, honest Sam abruptly entered, and in a joyful, self-satisfied tone, exclaimed—

“ *A billet-doux, sir!*”

On its being opened, the first thing that presented itself was a ticket for the Duchess of Toddleton's masked ball, to be given on that evening, ratified by her gracee's own seal. Now, as the whole fashionable world were on the *alerte*, and most eagerly on the look-out for cards of admission, this was no mean donative; on the contrary, as a proof of its value, a thrifty person of rank had sold at one of the Bond-street libraries a single ticket for twenty sovereigns. But Vivid's surprise did not terminate here; for the letter itself contained the following strange words:—

“ Oh! thou who I prophesy art doomed to become hereafter a Sheridan or a Congreve, refuse not to accept the enclosed charmed gift from the witch Cassandra!—Waste no time in attempting to find her, since, by means of her magic power, she will instantaneously discover you.

“ CASSANDRA.”

“ Discover you by her magic power!” ejaculated Sam—“ ha! ha!—To be sure she will; for, to be frank, look here, sir!—the servant who brought the letter put into my hand this sovereign, assuring me he would call again in the evening, when, if I revealed to him

the description of the dress you mean to wear at this duchess's masquerade, he would give me another."

"Indeed! and did you learn his mistress's name?"

"No; but judging by his splendid livery, I guess she must be a lady of some rank."

"'Tis very odd!—yet,—I'll go; but in what character? Let me see—it must be a theatrical one: Hamlet the Dane. Go, Alltact, and hire the dress for me."

Sam having procured it, brought it to the hotel, where he found the servant waiting—to whom he described the dress, and from whom he received the promised fee.

Hamlet the Dane entered the duchess's mansion about twelve o'clock, where, as dominos were excluded, he encountered an unusual diversity of masqueraders. Two characters were decidedly original: one was a large, moving featherbed; which proving a constant source of interruption to the whole room, many of the masks, by way of jocular retribution, sat and rolled upon it; and with such force, that the concealed, half-suffocated machinist bellowed for his life. The other character was even more original, namely, a *flea!*—an active, efficient *flea*, who frisked, hopped, and jumped, and tickled female necks, arms, and noses so nimbly and smartly, that whilst most of the fair mademoiselles were colouring and tittering, the *half-century madames* were all face-making and scratching*. Mrs. Almack (dressed

*The *flea* was acted by diminutive Miss ** of Drury-lane.

as a shepherdess), having loudly vituperated against the little imp's proceedings, it resolved to be revenged; and, accordingly, having first perched on her lap, it next suddenly dropped, and hopping, *sans cérémonie*, under the flounce of her petticoat, the irritated dowager writhed, kicked, and, in the attempt to catch the tormentor, so indecorously displayed her duck legs, that the whole room was convulsed with laughter.



Vivid, like the majority of the company, heartily enjoyed the fly-about *uncatchable* insect's frolics. He was also entertained by a quack-doctor, who, amongst other *nostrums*, offered for sale "oratorical pectoral lozenges," which, he contended, if properly insinuated and distributed amongst the M.P.'s in the lobby and in the body of the house of commons, would so completely prevent real and forced coughing, that even a bad speaker might have a chance of being heard the fair, considerate, gentlemanly time—ten minutes.

Still, in the way of broad attempts at character, there were three decided failures. The first was a *rat* in a full-dress *turned coat*—(nothing can render politics entertaining); the second was a printing-office (worked on small concealed wheels), where a well-known publication was periodically issued; and over the door was displayed, in large transparent letters, these words—"Bought before I'm sold." The third was the supposed treasurer of one of the metropolitan theatres, who went about with a private-box account, dunning several of those fashionable persons who, in imitation of Pistol, exclaim,

"Base is the slave that pays!"

Our hero was so occupied and amused with the passing scene, that he had almost forgotten the cause which had brought him there; when, receiving a tap from a wand on the shoulder, he turned round and be-

held the witch Cassandra.' She wore a haggish mask; but as it only covered two-thirds of the face, her coral lips and beautiful ivory teeth were fully displayed.

"So—I sought you, sif!"—she exclaimed. "Nay, start not, nor my tribe nor person scorn; for

‘Though a night-hag, when I dance
With Lapland witches, oft the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at our charms.’"

"No doubt," awescreed Vivid; "since, judging by the small portion of beauty you have permitted me to behold, many a fair enchantress now present might confess she was also eclipsed."

"'Tis well!—yet beware!—I can raise spirits from the vasty deep: but prove thou obedient to my will, and they and I shall ever be thy slaves; dare, though, to cross me in my hopes, and we will chain thee on Mount *Ætna's* top, and leave thee to partake Prometheus' fate."

"Upon my word! perfectly in character, my wild enchantress!—but why anticipate my disobedience: in truth, you have no cause to doubt my loyalty; and, as a proof, though boasting not of Lapland charms—come—will you join me in the dance?"

"Agreed!—your hand!"

Away they tripped; and, mixing in the dance, her light and graceful movements not only excited her

partner's admiration, hut also that of the whole room. He was so fascinated with her witchery, that all other thoughts were absorbed in this new delightful interest; when, to show the freakish nature of this whirligig world, a mask (a flower-girl), as she rapidly passed him in the dance, whispered slyly in his ear, "Is Lady Henrietta here?"

Taken by surprise, and feeling, like another Romeo, "as if that name, shot from the deadly level of a gun, was sent to murder him," he paused and trembled; but soon recollecting that the cause of his agitation must necessarily be absent, and rallied by his fascinating enslaver, who (without inquiring into the source of what she conceived to be sudden indisposition, arising from over-fatigue), led him to a seat, where in a few minutes becoming "himself again," they renewed the dance.

The duchess gave a sumptuous supper to her select friends, and Cassandra being reckoned amongst the number, she could not refrain from asking permission to add to her own invitation that of the captive Hamlet. The request being complied with, he was introduced to her grace, and the whole company (as is usual on these occasions), taking off their masks, the witchery of his enchanting partner was, in our hero's eyes, increased. She appeared to be about thirty-five years of age, and in person probably rather too much *embonpoint*; but her dark hair, her fine white

open forehead, and black, penetrating eyes, rendered the upper part of the face even more striking and beautiful than the lower, at least in the spell-hound royal Dane's opinion ; but not so in the opinions of more calm and rational persons—it appeared to them that the eye (the index of the mind) was cunning, fierce, and *basiliskan*. Besides, they had an advantage which he did not possess—they well knew her character, and could prove that, in the event of her being even coldly treated by the object of her choice, she was no common enemy; for in a case where, after much flirtation, she had at last been totally rejected, she resembled Congreve's Zara :—

“ Heaven knows no rage like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorn'd.”

Lady Ardourly (for so the representative of Cassandra was called) was the wife of Earl Ardourly; but being as much tired of her husband as he was of her, they had long ago agreed to enjoy that luxury which only the rich can afford—viz., a separation. Her ladyship certainly bore rather a doubtful reputation; but possessing an income of twenty thousand per annum, she was enabled so decidedly to support the character of a first-rate fashionable *party-giver*, that she was not only visited and received by *strawberry-leaf* dowagers, but, literally, could not be described as being absolutely excluded by the whole

of the *exclusives*. However, when it is considered that Lord Ardourly had never been able to detect her in any direct *liaison*, either at home or abroad (for she generally passed half of the year at Paris), there was, in point of fact, no decided reason why she should not, like others, have the benefit of our good old English law, and be deemed innocent till proved to be guilty.

But to another point. As, no doubt, some of our readers may be anxious to hear where Vivid had the good, or rather the bad fortune to attract Lady Ardourly's attention, be it known it was first at Lord Orville's house-warming, and afterwards at the opera, where she saw him, *à la distance*, soon after the day on which he had conducted himself with such gallantry at the duel. The fame of this transaction so much enhanced him in her opinion, and gave such an additional zest to the pursuit, that she immediately commenced operations, and in the shape of a masquerade-ticket first threw out her *talismanic* lures.

At the supper-table the impression already made was not at all lessened by her joining with professional vocalists in various popular glees; in all of which she displayed so much fine taste, tone, and spirit, that, for once, a private singer rivalled, if not surpassed, first-rate public singers. Unlike Mrs. Almack, Lady Ardourly was sure to bring a full room, and detain her auditors to the last moment; whilst the former, by her

persevering, ventilating powers, would clear the whole house in a twinkling, and, consequently, was principally invited by those hosts and hostesses who courted early hours and economy.

Though very far from being a Lovelace, our hero was as certainly not a Sir Charles Grandison, and never would have suffered a Clementina to have gone mad for him—more probably he would have gone mad for her. But since, no doubt, many of our fair readers will severely censure his conduct on this occasion, let it be remembered, in excuse, that when a woman has made up her mind *not to let a man escape* (and Lady Ardourly was not exactly the foundress of the system), it would require more than a heart of adamant to resist the strong impulses excited by such *Cireean* spells.

Supper concluded, the dance was renewed; and not till the officious sun warned them to depart did the light-footed tribe think of breaking up. When, however, the scene took place, so guardedly did Cassandra (for they had all re-assumed their masks) play her part, so well did she keep up appearances, that her partner was only allowed to be seen handing her into her carriage, though previously, as may be supposed, she had given him permission to call upon her next morning. This call being looked upon as the passport to his future happiness, he returned home all joy, where he found Sam Alltaet made equally happy by Cassandra, for out of her *douceur*, he had been regaling

himself to such an extent that, observing a decided alteration in his master's looks and manner, he (Sam), with more familiarity than was warrantable, thus addressed him :—

“ With all due submission, sir, may I venture to ask whether the character to be selected for the next masquerade is to be King Arthur in Tom Thumb?”

“ Why?” inquired Vivid.

“ Why, because, sir—I mean no offence—but, as I see you have been transformed by that senior-junior giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid, I think you would be highly effective in that scene when Tom first sees *Glumdalca*, and particularly in that passage where he exclaims “ Oh! oh! oh! I feel a sudden pain across my breast; nor know I whether it proceed from love or—*indigestion!*”

“ How, sirrah! why, you must be drunk.—Leave the room instantly, I command you!”

The accusation was certainly true, and Sam confessed the fact of his ineptitude, but pleaded in excuse that he was *gentlemanly* and not *vulgarily* tipsy; not with such kitchen-stuff as port, but with prime, elegant *chateau margaux*. This defence, and an additional reel confirming the admitted fact, he received a second command, and without waiting for another, he respectfully hiccuped and withdrew. Next morning, making apology after apology, his kind master freely forgave him. And now the appointed hour approach-

ing, the enraptured, blinded swain hastened towards Lady Ardourly's mansion, situated near the Regent's Park. He found her in the drawing-room, habited in a most becoming *deshabillé*, and reclining on the sofa. A book she had just been reading lay open near her, and Vivid, perceiving it was Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, asked her whether the ostener she saw and read that excellent comedy, she did not the more admire it?

"I do," she replied; "but still I have one fault to find, and that is, were I to make an assignation with a lover in my library, I think I could find for him a better *hiding-place* than Joseph found for *Lady Teazle*.

"Indeed!"

"Certainly: for to conceal her behind the skreen which he had previously ordered his servant to draw before the window, in consequence of 'his *opposite neighbour's great* curiosity,' was surely to place his fair *protégé* in a situation where her character was more likely to be exposed than preserved. Besides, was there not, at the same time, a safer hiding-place in the room, namely, the snug closet in which he afterwards conceals Sir Peter?"

"Very true: and it proves I know so little of the drama, and you so much, that if I write a comedy, I hope your ladyship will so far condescend as to allow me to have the benefit of your valuable observations."

"Oh, you flatter; and, besides, you are not likely

to contrive so badly as Joseph; for I suspect, Mr. Vivid, you are too well acquainted with the game of *hide and seek*, not to understand——”

At this moment a loud double knock being heard at the street-door, he was about to rise, when she requested him to keep his seat, saying, “I have given orders to the servants not to admit any body,” and she was beginning to renew the conversation, when, to her astonishment, the drawing-room door flew open, and in strutted, nodding and smiling, Sir Juniper Jackanape, a young free-and-easy coxcomb, who thought himself

“*Secundus nulli, preter Jovem.*”

“So!” he exclaimed, “your stupid servants thought fit to deny you—good joke, ‘pon honour—knew better than to let you lose the few spare moments I can unexpectedly devote to you—heard of you last night at the duchess’ masquerade—hem!” (sitting down and taking snuff)—“your glees and *cavatina* excellent—but who was the Goth or Hun that sported the character of Hamlet?—couldn’t get there myself, owing to the long debate—compelled to stay the division—compelled for the good of one’s country, you know.”

Lady Ardourly, for a time, was struck dumb with amazement and rage; but at length recovering herself, she exclaimed,

“Come—I know you, sir; and you *know* that I *know* you!”

"To be sure I do—and—hem!—it is not every body that can boast of this double honour."

"Matchless effrontery! Mr. Vivid, you see before you the person who, in the debate he speaks of last night, received such a lashing from men of real political and oratorical talents, that it was expected he would instantly have applied for the Chiltern Hundreds; but, instead of being humbled, you perceive —"

"My dear Lady Ardourly, you ought to know that, next to yourself, uotoriety—darling notoriety!—is my goddess; and do you think I came into that house to squat in obscurity? No; 'tis with M. P.'s as it is with creditors—the noisy ones carry all their points: and as a proof my noise goes for something, to-day I have refused Jack R * * * †, on purpose to dine with Canterbury, who, by-the-by, next week will himself unite me to Lady Elizabeth."

Here Lady Ardourly, losing all patience, turned away in disgust, and took up the hook, on which Sir Juniper, taking another pinch of snuff, and coolly looking over her shoulder, thus continued:

"Oh!—the 'School for Scandal.' Well! I somewhat approve of your selection; for, though I despise the drama, I consider this to be so creditable a production, that I should not be ashamed of having written it myself."

"Really!" rejoined Lady Ardourly: "upon my

† The Duke of B * * *.

word, this is too preposterous ; and I cannot resist, sir (to Vivid), informing you that, although this despiser of the drama has written nearly a dozen plays and farces, his love of notoriety has not been so far gratified as to see one of them even condemned,—for they were all refused."

" *Scan. mag.* upon my honour—I, who aspire not only to a seat in the cabinet, but who, at my death, am sure to have a *niche* in the abbey—ay, and another in the history of England."

" Well, sir," said Vivid, emphatically, " and do you mean to insinuate that a dramatic writer is precluded from receiving (at any rate) these *post mortem* honours ? If so, I have been grossly misinformed, and no such men as Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, Congreve, Addison, or Sheridan, ever existed."

" *Anan !* as the rustics say," rejoined Sir Juniper : " pray, your ladyship, *who* are we ? and *where* are we ?"

" Why, in my house, sir ; and to which this gentleman, Mr. Vivid, is at least as welcome as Sir Juniper Jackanape."

" Really ! Then, I've nothing else left for it but to quote the old saying of the knife to the oyster."

" And what's that, sir ?"

" Why—‘ I fear I'm going to intrude.’ "

" On such a delicate point, sir, you are best judge ; but, for the future, I advise you, for your own sake, to believe the servants when they inform you I am

not at home; since, if you will, in spite of my directions, persist in marching up stairs and importantly ordering every body about you, why I shall certainly look upon you as master of the house, and consequently trouble you to pay all my tradesmen's bills."

"*Bon—excellent!*—(singing)

'Never till now I felt love's dart—
 Guess who it was that stole my heart :
 'T was you alone, if you 'll believe me,
 Lira, lira, la.'"

Then, rising, he rang the bell, and on the servant's entering, he consequentially desired to be shown down stairs, adding—"Tradesmen's bills, quotha ! Lira, lira, la."

Vivid soon after expressing his surprise at seeing Lady Ardourly's anger so speedily vanish, she confessed that though his effrontery was unprecedented, yet his good-nature and frank mode of *giving* as well as *taking*, had rendered him a sort of privileged man ; and for her own part, where her heart was not concerned, she seldom troubled herself with considering whether a coxcomb was more or less impertinent, particularly when he was out of sight.

Our hero, it appeared, had seen him before at Lord Orville's party ; and though the great orator did not here recollect the humble dramatist, the latter remembered him ; in fact, none could forget the self-corsti-

tuted Chrichton; who (amidst a display of all the first people of rank and fashion) walked about taking snuff, and muttering pretty loudly—"Not a soul in the room besides myself. Hem!—darnme."

The next subject of their "sweet discourse" turning on the present *mania* for travelling on the continent, he inquired whether she preferred Paris to London?

"Oh, yes," she replied; "and—heigho!—I wish I were there at this moment."

"Indeed! May I venture to ask, why?"

"Because there you may live free as mountain air, whilst here, in this age of saints and sentimentalists, that dull monitor, *restraint*, checks us, at every turn—all formality, no reality—and though pure affection may now and then accidentally be revived, it merely acts *galvanically*, and, after an animating twitch or two, all is cold again.

Here the conversation was interrupted by the servant coming to announce that her ladyship's chariot was waiting, according to her order.

"What!" she exclaimed, "is it two o'clock? Lord! what a strange monster Time is! Sometimes too slow, sometimes too fast; now like a tortoise, then like a race-horse. Well! let the carriage wait—yet—stop—no—I've an appointment with the duchess, and I cannot afford, for various reasons, to disappoint her. Excuse me, Mr. Vivid, merely till I make my *toilette*,

and then, if you are going towards Hyde Park, I hope you will allow me to have the pleasure of setting you down."

The offer was of course thankfully accepted, and in half an hour afterwards he handed her into her carriage, when, just before they arrived at Hyde Park-gate, she invited him to come in the evening to her box at the opera, and see the new Italian *sun* (for this *prima donna* was above being called *star*), Signora Stavelotzi. This invitation being also accepted, they parted, mutually more and more delighted with each other. Thus with our hero merrily rolled the hours away, and equally prosperously did they roll on at Lord Carisbrook's; for his lordship had lately ascertained at the Admiralty, that the name of the frigate which had weathered the gale; and was safely moored in the harbour of Malta, proved to be no other than the "Protector."

Still the particulars had not yet transpired; but the lords and secretary entertained not the slightest doubt on the subject; and next day Lady Morden had the heartfelt gratification of receiving a letter from her husband, thus satisfactorily worded:

"Malta, Feb. —,

"MY DEAR HENRIETTA,

"After having weathered the most tremendous gale I ever encountered, here I am, thanks to Almighty Providence, as safe and as well as you and

your revered father can wish me to be; but since I know he will be most anxious for all particulars, at once let me tell him, that whilst driving fast towards the coast of Barbary, in a disabled state, we were hailed by a large vessel bearing English colours. Of course we used every effort towards lying-to; when we so far succeeded, that our supposed preserver came up with us, and then think of our astonishment and mortification, when she hauled down the British flag, raised the Algerine colours, and attempted to board us. With six feet water in the hold, our rigging cut away, and our whole ship's company exhausted by fatigue, it was, as you may conceive, no easy matter to resist these piratical traitors. For some time the conflict became most formidable; but English gallantry prevailed, and many of them were driven overboard, while others were put under hatches. Thus again becoming our own masters, and succeeding in stopping the leaks, we rode out the storm, and arrived next morning at Malta, where, I am sorry to add, I shall be compelled to remain at least four months; for the frigate is so dreadfully dismantled, that at least that length of time will be occupied in repairing it. Oh! you may easily imagine how much I wish that period were arrived, or that you and your good father, in charity, would join me here. But I talk wildly, and therefore I will conclude with imploring you both to write, and as often as possible.

“ Ever—ever most affectionately yours,

“ GEORGE MORDEN.

Lady Henrietta, during the perusal of this agitating narrative, frequently paused and wept; whilst her father exultingly exclaimed—

“ My life on’t, by his own gallantry and perseverance he has saved his ship! I knew he was a noble fellow—a son after my own heart; and but for this cursed *leg-winger*, my old antagonist, I would immediately proceed to join him. Count Montnoir is acquainted with the route; and he would, you know, Henrietta, cheerfully escort us.” “ No doubt, my lord,” she replied; then held down her head, sighed, and said no more: whilst her enthusiastic father continued lavishing his just, though somewhat boisterous, praises on what he called a “ second Nelson.”



CHAPTER VIII.

Signora Stavelozzi *encore*—Mademoiselle Aufait, a better operatic *maneuvre*—A *fête champêtre*—Two storms—A bedchamber scene—Caricatures and paragraphs—Two strollers in a rage—Officious men of honour—Battersea-fields, but without even pigeon-shooters.—A new club, and new *convivial* regulation.

LADY ARDOURLY, except in the society of her *new elect*, was abstracted, restless, and peevish; but on his making his appearance, the “mist” immediately “dispersed,” and she became good-tempered, playful, and uncommonly *pains-taking*. At the opera (where they met according to appointment), artfully selecting his subject and not her own, she told him some new dramatic anecdotes. Amongst others, she said she had heard, that the new *prima donna*, Signora Stavelozzi, relying on her own unparalleled *grand talent*, had insisted on the manager’s not degrading her by resorting to that vulgar, meretricious *systém* of puffing and quackery, which was only necessary for others.

“*Oui!*” she exclaimed, “there be de certain *bubbles* vich can be *seulement* blown into notice, *comme ça*, hy dis *charlatancerie*; but for myself, *moi-même*, qui am one

autre St. Cecile, I soar, fly, without the aid of *la mortelle machinerie.*"

"*Est-il possible?*" replied the manager.

"*Oui; et si vous* do not meet *mes demandes*, I shall, *entendez-vous*, dis very night be *malade, enroué*, vat you call 'hoarse.'"

This was the *argumentum ad hominem* with a vengeance; and monsieur le directeur immediately complying, the result may be easily anticipated. Leaving her (as she desired) to stand alone on rational ground,

"In less than six nights her attraction," continued her ladyship, "has lessened one half; and in a week or two more her fate will resemble that of a popular quack medicine, which the proprietor suddenly and thrifitily leaving off advertising, no future 'oblique or direct puffs' could ever place the 'universal panacea' within the reach of renovation."

After the Irish transaction,* Vivid confessed he should feel no regret if she did share the fate of the "universal panacea;" yet he acknowledged that, in his opinion, the signora was a splendid first-rate singer; and, had she copied the example of most of her pre-

* The signora asked an Irish manager one hundred and fifty pounds a night for eighteen nights; also a free benefit: to which modest proposal he wrote, in answer, that he doubted whether there was so much money in all Ireland; but he was certain there was not one-third of it in the town where he was manager.

decessors, who, knowing John Bull must be coaxed and courted like a mistress, and not coldly and silently passed over like a wife, why, she, like previous *aéronauts*, or rather like *argonauts*, would have carried home, *à la Jason*, a glorious golden fleece.

According to Junius, "In the shipwreck of the state trifles float at the top, whilst all that is great and valuable sinks to the bottom;" and such was proved to be the result of the signora's operatic overthrow. Whilst the burden of her song continued to be "Down, derry down," another very inferior *cantatrice*, Mado-moiselle Aufait, was singing "Up, merry up;" and with reason; for aware that nearly as much fame was to be acquired *off* the stage as *on*, she courted the manager and the press, gave Sunday *conversazioni*, and, now and then, a sort of *bas-bien* dinner, where, by means of music, turtle, champagne, hot-house vegetables and fruits (such as February green peas and strawberries), she so completely gained the interest of her guests, and forced herself into early maturity, that she was soon enabled to say confidently to the signora,

"Whilst my star mounts,
Thine rides down the sky."

At the conclusion of the opera, Lady Ardourly, still struggling against her inclination, and resolving to keep up appearances, again only allowed our hero to hand her into the carriage; but previously she had given him

another invitation for the next day, and then for the day after that, and so on, till thus, for some time, regularly “ran *their* world away.”

About this time Lord and Lady Orville gave a *fête champêtre* at a cottage *ornée* they had hired for the spring months on the banks of the Thames, and there Lady Ardourly and our hero’s first love tiff, or rather breeze, occurred. The morning proved extremely propitious; but towards the afternoon the sky lowered, and dark gathering clouds foretold the approach of the usual facetious enemy to “these our rural sports,” rain, which, as if drawn down and attracted by the number of fine fashionable female dresses, soon pelted at them most efficiently. Some scared *élégantes* sought shelter in the tents; but others ran towards the house; and not with much better judgment, since, from its contracted size, it could scarcely contain half the company. Soon it became crammed in every hole and corner. Some even (of course as a last alternative) took refuge in the bedchambers: amongst others “our loving pair;” when, from her ladyship’s usual dread of not appearing sufficiently correct, and on this occasion assuming more than maiden modesty, she insisted on his locking the door. He obeyed, and thinking herself thus secure, and being overcome by heat and fatigue, she sat down or rather reclined on the bed. At this moment they were alarmed and disturbed by hearing the handle of the lock turn, and soon after the lady’s

fears were further increased by the noise of persons pushing against the door, and endeavouring to force it. In such a dilemma, what was to be done? She trembled, and declared she would not be discovered alone with a man in a bédchamber for the whole world, so tenacious was she of that jewel, reputation.

The noise increasing, no time was to be lost; and perceiving, in one corner of the room, a large, lofty, modern arm-chair, she hastily drew it a foot or two from the wall, and then instantly concealed herself behind it, only just one moment before the door was burst open, and Sir Henry Reefley, Count Moutnoir, Mrs. and Miss Almack, and "last, not least," Lady Henrietta (all wet and shivering with the cold) entered; when, to their astonishment, they beheld the cause of their delay and necessary violence, our hero, standing before them, and in such a state of embarrassment and confusion, that when Sir Henry, the count, and the Almacks persisted to know why he did not open the door, and why he kept them so long waiting in their present *distré* state, he blushed, hesitated, and only stammered out—

"I did not hear."

This absurd excuse naturally increased their astonishment; but Sir Henry wisely looking on him as a secondary object, considering the comfort of his suffering fair companions to be the first, rang the bell, and ordered the servant to light the fire. Whilst this

useful ceremony was being performed. Mrs. Almack sarcastically asked Vivid why he took no notice of Lady Morden. He begged pardon, bowed, and in a tremulous tone said he hoped she was well.

"What! is that all? so cold, so changed, indeed?" continued the tormentor. "Oh! as we guessed: yes, yes! there never was a scandalous story without some foundation. Pray, may we hope, sir, Lady Ardourly is *also* well?"

"Who, madam?" was the reply.

"You hear, ladies and gentlemen," rejoined 'Mrs. Candour,' "Joseph the *second* never saw or knew such a person—did you, Joseph? Oh, guilty, upon my honour; for we all know, '*L'amour et la fumée ne peuvent se cacher.*'"

"Why, I do not depy," rejoined Vivid, "that—that is, that Lady Ardourly and honour are as inseparable——"

"As herself and Lord Ardourly."

On this every body tittered, except Lady Henrietta, whose previous agitation was so much increased by this galling conversation, that she turned pale, tottered, and evidently was about to faint, when Sir Henry, with the view of seating and placing her near the fire, rapidly drew the arm-chair from the wall, and discovered (*proh pudor!*) the Right Honourable Lady Ardourly!

"A sail, a sail!" exclaimed Sir Henry: "cheerily

oh!—pipe all hands—look out ahead—mind the *privateer* don't sheer off—yeo! yeo!" (Fastening door.)



"*Di tanti palpiti*," hummed Mrs. Almack; whilst Miss Almack, whose cant word was, "I don't go into it," unaccountably took it into her head to go into a fit, or rather to go into her dear Sir Henry's arms. Whilst he supported her, and the count was occupied in attending to poor Lady Morden (who was rendered much worse by the unlucky incident), Vivid, with great presence of mind, thought, that whilst they remained in

this state of abstraction and confusion, it was an excellent opportunity for sounding a retreat; and the lady agreeing, the exposed, defeated, miserable pair, not only out of the room, but soon after out of Lord Orville's garden,

" Took their solitary way *."

On their journey back to London, Lady Ardourly naturally vented all her pent-up rage on our unfortunate hero. In vain he attempted to console and compose her.

" If you would but be silent," he exclaimed.

" Never!" she replied: "'the tongue of a woman is her sword, sir; and she's a fool who lets it rust †.' I will be heard; and, one way or another, I insist on your vindicating my character—now—immediately!—Oh! when I selected such a novice for my élève elect, I might have known what I had to expect."

He assured her he would explain every thing to the whole party, account for the concealment, and take all the blame to himself. This somewhat calmed her perturbed spirit; and keeping his word, he next morning wrote explanatory letters to all the parties who were present at the unfortunate exposition of the day before, requesting them calmly to take the matter into

* Lady Ardourly, it appears, reckoned without her host when she talked of finding a better hiding-place than Joseph Surface found.

† Old proverb.

consideration, and hoping they would look upon it as a circumstance which arose, in the first place, from accident, and in the second from Lady Ardourly's sudden and unnecessary alarm; concluding with asserting on his honour, that no person living could have the slightest ground (at least on this occasion) for aspersing either of their characters. To these letters he only received two answers: one from Lord and Lady Orville completely acquitting him, but still condemning his fair partner, whose artful and intriguing disposition they avowed they too well knew.

The other reply was from Lady Henrietta (whom he had addressed with more than common respect), and who admitted, "That as she should have been very sorry to have withdrawn altogether the good opinion she had hitherto formed of him, she was thankful for the explanation; and, indulging in this feeling, she begged leave to assure him that she implicitly believed what he had so solemnly asserted."

— This amply compensated for all the annoyance the late unlucky accident had caused him. He kissed the letter again and again, and swore that her pure conduct should henceforth be the sole bright model for his own. As to the count, Sir Henry, and Mrs. and Miss Almack, they never took any notice of his letters; but two of the *quartette* (the dowager and the foreigner), as may be imagined, made, at Carisbrook House, so much of the bedchamber discovery,

that they were gratified in beholding Lady Ardourly's "paramour" (as they called him) more and more disliked and abused by the inveterate old peer.

Scandal, or rather rumour, "flying on eagle's wings," the newspapers soon noticed the late *fête champêtre*, and its catastrophe, the bed-chamber scene; and soon afterwards the whole circumstance was caricatured and displayed in several print-shops. Vivid, not having before made his appearance in the character of an *intrigant*, felt so sore and irritable on the occasion, that he called on his friend Oxymel for consolation and advice, who inquired "whether he could deny the truth of the story."

"Not altogether," was the reply; "at least as far as appearances go; but I can *in toto* give a denial as to the reality or criminality."

"That's nothing," rejoined the friendly editor. "In these cases the misjudging public decide wholly by appearances, and therefore we have but one alternative."

"And pray what may that be?"

"Why, we must fix it on another *intrigant*."

"Ah! but on whom? Besides—no—no—I do not think it fair."

"Psha! nonsense: many will hail it as a new feather—boast of it—glory in it. Come, I'll name two at once: Blase, *alias* Beau Bronzely, and Sir Juniper

Jackanape—both notoriety hunters; and particularly in the *liaison* line."

"Ay; I have seer the latter, and I should not be surprised if he winked—connived—"

"To be sure; but still—I'm more certain of the sly, insinuating Bronzely. *Ex grā.* A few months ago, meeting him in Pall Mall, I asked him if he had heard the *on dit*, or, in other words, the lie of the day. 'No; what is it?' he replied. 'Why,' continued I, 'Lady Sensitive, the beautiful young widow whom they have for some time scandalously reported to have been in that state 'which ladies wish to be who love their lords,' (though her lord has been dead these three years), they now say was yesterday actually delivered of a fine chubby —' 'How! bless me!' exclaimed Blasé Bronzely. 'Yes,' continued I, 'but 'tis a gross falsehood; and if I were one of her relations—' 'Stop!' he continued, 'Stop!' (taking out his pocket-book, and opening an almanack in a hurried manner)—' Yesterday you say! yesterday! Hem! it's no lie; no; accurate to the very day. *Nonum parturit in mensem.* Hem!' and away he went, tossing up his head, and singing

"Oh, no! we never mention her! "

"Well! this is extraordinary," cried Vivid; "but although the conceited gentleman disregarded the old rule of 'Never kiss and tell,' yet might it not be possible——"

"Impossible! I know to a certainty, that though Lady Sensitive has frequently met him at parties, she has not altogether held five minutes' conversation with him. And why should she? For when you consider this *half-century philanderer*, this nick-named Beau Bronzely, not only wears a wig, but sports a long sallow visage, gray eyebrows, and an abundance of tell-tale crows' feet, surely such a beautiful creature as Lady Sensitive might, according to the old familiar saying, 'have gone farther and not fared worse.' However, if you prefer Sir Juniper, take him, but immediately, for I am determined one of the two shall be made happy to-morrow by figuring in print."

"Well! according to your argument, there will be no harm done, and therefore let Mr. Bronzely be the happy elect; but at the same time, after all, how will it avail? for I candidly tell you, though in fact only appearances were against us, yet five witnesses can be brought to prove—"

"Pooh!—I'll back a paragraph against five hundred witnesses. The moment *we*, that is, my paper, points at Bronzely, he's the man—'*Ecce homo!*'"

Here Vivid, being pressed for time, thanked the accommodating editor, and departed. Next morning the expected article appeared, in which "further particulars of the late bed-chamber scene were revealed, and a certain *palavering* old beau was adroitly insinuated into the "plot." The effect produced was nearly

as great as Oxymel had anticipated; for, amongst other proofs of the paragraph being fully believed, Sir Juniper meeting Blase Bronzely in the street gave him joy, and confessed that he envied him; to which the latter only replied, “ Fie! fie!”—then pulling up his cravat, and cocking his eye, he walked on, leaving Sir Juniper wondering, whilst he was in existence, how such a fellow as Bronzely could be thus selected.

Undoubtedly this cool, conceited Bronzely, being very popular, even with some *exclusives*, was one of those extraordinary anomalies which only occur in this most extraordinary metropolis. In the first place, he never, even by accident, spoke truth: in the second—contending there was more real courage in making up his mind to refuse, than to accept, a challenge—he never fought at all. As a proof: One night, when in the lobby of the theatre, a naval officer breasted him, and then exclaimed, “ There, sir, I’ve pulled your nose!” (at the same time suiting the action to the word)—“ No, you hav’n’t,” was the beau’s only reply, and he hastily tripped away. In the third place, like all hypocrites, he was constantly traducing his friends behind their backs; but to their faces—oh! there was the sole, the secret cause of his success. He had “a tongue would wheedle with the devil;” and, like Sir Pertinax in the play, he contrived “to mak every mon, ah! and woman, pleased wi’ themselves,” and consequently pleased with him. This was his sole redeeming qua-

lity; for as to winning admirers, by any display of convivial or anecdotal talent, he seldom attempted it; or if he did, and Sir Juniper were one of the party, he was sure to stop him by whispering—" Speak lower, Bronzely, or you 'll be heard."

While these scenes were passing elsewhere, Lady Ardourly's rage and indignation hourly increased. Vivid she proclaimed to be a "fool, a stupid lump of insensibility;" and the last time they met, she actually threatened never to speak to him again; when, strange to say, that he secretly hoped she would keep her word; thus each of them proving, as usual, that

" These violent delights have violent ends."

As to the paragraphs and caricatures, she declared she would not only immediately bring actions and file indictments; but if these failed, she would show the beggarly lampooners she could afford to carry on a *twenty years' chancery war*; never considering that the more she moved on such an occasion, the more she gave her enemies the advantage, since by increased publicity she kept alive attacks, which otherwise would have passed away, and been as much forgotten as the last year's clouds.

Vivid's only consolation during these repeated perplexities was in the usual recollection, viz. the quantity of grist he had procured for his dramatic mill: and he made up his mind not only to dramatise Sir

Juniper, Bronzely, the Almacks, and *himself*, but he indulged the hope of introducing in his *dramatis personæ* another original and entertaining character—no less a personage than Samuel Alltaet, *Esquire*; for, judging by a late event, lie certainly seemed to suppose he was warranted in bestowing that title. The case was as follows :

Vivid one morning, as usual, ringing his bell about eight o'clock, the waiter informed him that the aforesaid Sam was not only absent from his accustomed post, but that he had risen very early, gone out, and had not yet returned. As few servants were more punctual than Sam, this irregularity of conduct much surprised his master, who was proceeding to make further inquiry, when he received a letter from the missing gentleman. But, strange to say, this letter and its contents only increased the surprise : it was brought by no common messenger—but by a Bow-street officer ; and the cause of his non-appearance (as described in the following words) was equally curious and unexpected.

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ When I tell you I am detained here for want of bail, I trust you will be kind and good enough not to delay coming to my assistance, and particularly as I have not degraded either you or myself by being brought here on any low disgraceful charge. No,

sir; my high crime and misdemeanor is—an *affair of honour*, the particulars of which I will narrate when you do me the favour of calling.

"Your dutiful servant,

"SAMUEL ALLTACT.

"Bow-street, ten o'clock."

"An affair of honour!" exclaimed Vivid. "Bravo! upon my word, this *is* the march of intellect!" However, soon making up his mind, he desired the waiter to inform the landlord that he should be glad to speak with him, who immediately obeyed, and after a few explanatory words agreed to join in becoming bail for gallant Sam. The ceremony over, and the liberated champion alone with his master, the following dialogue took place.

"An affair of honour! Pooh!"

"You shall hear, sir," replied Sam. "Last night, after the play, whilst taking my oysters and whisky and water at one of the *genteel* chophouses near the theatre, two old acquaintances, rival strollers, Mr. Daggerwood and Mr. Tag, came in and joined company. We had seldom ever previously met without sparring, quite in the York and Lancaster style, when, of course, argument (that *social bore*) commencing, we first disagreed as to the merits of the new afterpiece. Next we differed as to the conduct of a certain manager.

'I said it was a great shame on the part of the performers to attack a man whose wonted liberality—'

'Ahem!' rejoined Mr. Daggerwood, 'read *wanted* liberality—you understand.' 'Pooh!' I replied: 'I deny, despise the insinuation; and I boldly say such a manager ought not to lose their confidence.' 'Can't lose what he never had,' replied Mr. Tag. 'However, he has one consolation—won't lose his own confidence, ha! ha!—and hope you'll have another consolation—hope you won't lose your free admissions.'"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Vivid: "why, 'slife! that was personal."

"So I considered it, sir. There they touched me on my sore point—my pride: and rendering the insult more provoking by tittering and exchanging significant looks, I at length flew into such a rage, that I exclaimed, 'A plague on all liars, say I! and if I had my way they should be served like cowards—shot, shot.' 'All liars shot!' Mr. Tag cried out: 'why then, Mr. Callboy, you'd have to commit suicide.' This, sir, was beyond endurance; and pulling off my coat, I placed myself in a boxing attitude."

"Oh! I anticipate what's to follow. The stage-struck heroes considering this mode of fighting beneath the dignity of the sock and buskin——"

"No; I beg pardon, sir—Mr. Tag did not object; but two strangers in the next box—two officious, tiger-

faced busy-bodies—who boasted they perfectly understood the laws of honour, and secretly wished to get up a downright duel, insisted that, for the credit of the enlightened sons of Thespis, the matter should not terminate in a disgraceful pugilistic combat."

" Well! and what was the result?"

" Why, sir,—as you know is frequently the case on these occasions—we were compelled to fight to please others; certainly not to please ourselves. But, to cut my story short, I found myself with my second (well provided with powder, balls, and pistols) in a hackney coach, proceeding at five o'clock next morning towards Battersea-fields. When near the appointed awful spot, 'where to one or both of us the time was come,' my carriage overtook and came alongside the coach which contained Tag and *his* second; when the former put his head out of the window, and pointing inside, said—'Look here! two police-officers have just cooled my courage, and two others, my dear Sammy, are coming up to cool yours.'"

" Well!" continued Vivid, smiling, "and at this intrusion weren't you much mortified and shocked?"

" Oh fie, sir! how can you ask such a question, when you must be aware, that if, like myself, a man has 'screwed his courage to the sticking-place,' it becomes a most painful and difficult matter to *unscrew* himself? For my part, I confess my valour's not

nearly yet oozed out; and I'm glad on't, since I perceive our quarrel isn't half settled."

"No!"

"No, sir; for, on my coming out of the office, he told me that I owed him two pounds ten shillings; and guess for what, sir?—Nothing less than, as he said, for *half* the surgeon!"

"What surgeon?"

"Why, the dastard in his fright, sir, had fee'd Mr. Probely to accompany him; and now he swears, if I don't immediately pay the moiety, he will let loose upon me his own brother, who, to be sure, is a far more formidable combatant than himself, for he is an—attorney. However, as the man says in the play, 'I won't swear, but d—n me if I'll be bullied!' And let him call me out again, that's all!—See whether that's a bloodless duel!"

"Thus runs the world away," and thus we become more and more an enlightened, well-bred age. Strollers and valets aspire to the honours of the *duello*; punctually paid tradespeople give as loud double-knocks at the street door as any even of their wealthiest customers; clergymen are not by any means *non.* con. as to the unorthodox act of *crim. con.*; quakers are not all "Simon Pures;" grown-up children learn the gallopade and quadrilles; and some few of the rising generation have actually so much improved in their

manners and understanding, that their relatives and friends are about to establish a new club, to be called the “*Young Chesterfield Beau-ideal* *.”

* Amongst other regulations in this new club, it is to be hoped that the members, like the monks of *La Trappe*, shall be allowed to communicate with each other *once a week*, since at present, in many of these modern institutions, such a grand, suspicious silence prevails, that on a new candidate being elected, he thinks each member has sent the other to *Coventry*.



CHAPTER IX.

Age of cant--Sick chamber--Reported death--The boudoir--Love and hatred--"Sidlepiplng," a new word--A legal spy--The chalk pencil--Express to Malta--Dover pier--A basket of game--and the Foundling Hospital.

ON the evening of the day on which heroic Sam was thus liberated, Vivid being informed that an important document was immediately required in his father's chancery suit, and well remembering that Mr. Latitat was not only a blundering, but also a *slow-waggon* attorney, he thought it best to rely on his own exertions, and, *ergo*, started in an hour, per mail, for Gloucestershire; but he started in such haste, that he left no direction. However, he was only absent from London three days; and directly after he returned, Lady Ardourly requesting, or rather, as he thought, commanding, an interview, he merely muttered out the old proverb, "I needs must go," &c., and then proceeded to obey orders.

On arriving at her ladyship's house he was ushered into the drawing-room, where he found her in a very different state of temper from what he had anticipated. She smiled, requested him to sit near to her on the

sofa, and begged him to understand*that what she had lately said was “in her rage;” that she now saw his conduct in a proper light; and being, as he must perceive, more calm and rational, she should be happy to converse with him in their usual friendly style. Vivid (who was not exactly the novice she supposed him to be) naturally suspected she had some selfish motive for this strange and sudden alteration. *Latet anguis in herba*, said he to himself; and that his suspicions were not totally unfounded will be proved by the sequel.

“ Yes, Mr. Vivid,” she exclaimed; “in consequence of having become more and more disgusted with this dull, censorious country, I have resolved, Roman-like, to inflict banishment on myself, and reside for ever abroad.”

Vivid confessed that she had been most unjustly and scandalously treated, and by those prudish personages who evidently preached what they did not practise; for he maintained that at no*period of the English history were the courts of law or the public prints half so much occupied with crim. con., seduction, and other *unsaintlike* cases, as at present. Still he trusted, for the sake of a few ingenuous and open-hearted friends, Lady Ardourly would not persist in her resolution of residing for ever out of England.

“ Why not, Mr. Vivid?” she replied significantly;

"why may I not reside where I may pass my time with such friends as you describe, and without restraint?—without being subject to those vulgar observations and insinuations, which in Paris, Naples, and other (if I may use the word) *unstraightlaced* cities, never escape the lips even of the *canaille*?"

"Such an 'experienced traveller,'" resumed Vivid, "as your ladyship undoubtedly must have formed a correct judgment; otherwise I should have imagined that the difference of character between the two countries would prove to be as trifling as the distance: but of this I confess I am no judge, since, never having yet crossed the channel——"

"True, I forgot your having previously told me so. How fortunate though!—for when you come to Paris I shall be so happy to be your *chaperon*;—yes, you need not be surprised, *your chaperon*—all regular *there*. Well! when will you come?—I shall set off on Saturday—and the sooner you follow me the more I shall be gratified:—suppose you say Sunday, or, at the latest, Monday."

Vivid, taken by surprise, stared, changed colour, and made such a long pause that Lady Ardonry drew up her head, and somewhat haughtily exclaimed,

"I presume, sir, silence gives consent: if not—if you have any hesitation——"

"Oh no! I have n—o hesi—ta—ti—on, madam,

but——” (stammering, looking as foolish as Sir Andrew Aguecheck, and rising from the sofa).

“ As I expected, sir (also leaving her seat). I sent for you purposely to give you this last opportunity, or rather purposely, by this last trial, to discover your real feelings; and now the die is cast. From this moment—mark me, sir!—I am your avowed enemy; and such punishment as wounded pride—don’t flatter yourself, not disappointed love—can inflict, be prepared to experience. You have extricated yourself from silken chains, but now how will you escape from iron ones.”

Here, with “d disdain and scorn riding sparkling in her eye,” she abruptly left the room; whilst our hero, although, as before stated, suspecting that no tender motive had caused this interview, yet certainly had not come prepared for this sort of violent *eclaircissement*. He was then about to retire, dwelling on the recollections of the pure, delightful charms of another, when Lady Ardourly suddenly threw open the door, and, with an air of triumph, exclaimed—

“ So!—have you heard that one of my tradueers will no more torment me? One whose life, according to *censorious* reports, you, sir, are most anxious to preserve, is at this moment—dying!”

“ Dying? Heavens!” replied Vivid, trembling with agitation, and scarcely able to articulate—“ You do not, cannot allude to——”

“ I do: to Lady Morden! Ay; and if you doubt

my information, seek it below, from him who has this moment bro' 't it—Lord Orville's servant."

Of course, Lady Ardourly and the whole world disappearing before him, he rushed down stairs instantly to make further inquiry; and, alas! the fatal truth being too soon confirmed by Lord Orville's own valet (who had called on an old fellow-servant), Vivid ran out of the house in a state of suspense, alarm, and agitation bordering on frenzy. On his way to Lord Orville's, he passed Carisbrook House, where the disastrous tidings were still further confirmed by his beholding not only the knockers tied up, but, according to his wild and heated imagination, the shutters all closed. Still he knew he dared not even ring the bell, and consequently he was hastening away, when a chariot drawing up to the door, containing Sir Henry Reefley and another gentleman, he paused, and waited to overhear what answer to inquiries was given by Lord Carisbrook's servants. Their reply was, "They were extremely sorry to say the two physicians, not half an hour ago, had informed Lady Orville that Lady Morden could not survive the night." This fearful intelligence, which seemed not particularly to affect Sir Henry and his companion, had nearly proved a death-blow to our distracted hero. Contriving, however, to rally, he at length reached Lord Orville's, where he was informed that a cold, whieh had been hanging

about the invalid for two or three previous days, had ended, the night before the last, in a "holent-typhus" fever.

His lordship, notwithstanding, suspected that this sudden and dangerous attack originated from another circumstance;

"Which, when I reveal, Vivid," he said, "I think you will agree that I am right." Lady Henrietta had, on that very morning, been long closeted with her father; and on her leaving his bedchamber (where he was confined by the gout) she had been observed by the servants to be violently agitated, and much changed in her appearance.

"Indeed!" replied our hero; "and has what passed in this mysterious interview still remained a profound secret?"

"It has: nothing has transpired, except that, from the few words which in the first instance she dropped before her maid, Lord Carishrook had received a letter, conveying most fatal and heart-rending intelligence."

"What can it mean?"

"Heaven knows! for so rapid was the advance of the disease, that ere her bosom friend, Lady Orville, came to her assistance, aberration of mind had commenced."

"Well, well, the dark tale will die with her; for, however uncertain the cause of the attack, the effect, alas! seems likely to be too certain."

That Lord Orville's anxiety and sympathy nearly equalled his friend's was proved by his unremitting attention; and while Mrs. and Miss Almack, having ascertained from the physicians that the disease was contagious, cautiously moved off, and took up their quarters at a hotel, Lady Orville never quitted the bedside of her suffering friend, who, melancholy to relate, had no recollection of any person whatever. In her wanderings she would often say—"Well, well! Heaven knows that I am innocent!"—then, ere any explanation could be given, she would relapse into insensibility, and soon after start up and exclaim—"There! don't keep him from my sight!—he comes to solace—to—no—no—we must not meet—no—but oh! perhaps hereafter—yes, hereafter!" Then she would smile, fall gently back on her pillow, and for a moment or two remain in a comparatively composed state.

Lady Orville, who had all along thought with the first physician, that the disease had been caused by mental agitation (particularly as she had heard of the late mysterious interview with her father), was well aware to whom these incoherent expressions alluded; but what was to be done? In a less delicate case, the patient might possibly have been benefited by the sight of the object which so absolutely engrossed the mind. But here the hope of such remedy vanished almost as soon as it appeared—for the poor sufferer

was still Captain Morden's wife and Lord Carisbrouk's daughter.

However, when the nurse entered the chamber, and stated that Lord Orville had just gone into the adjoining room, and had brought with him a strange gentleman, Lady Orville (not forgetting that Mrs. and Miss Almack had left the house, that Count Montnoir was out of town, and that Lord Carisbrook was confined to his room) secretly hoped this gentleman would prove to be no other than the person before alluded to; and leaving her patient for a moment, she found him (somewhat disguised) in close conversation with her husband, who, partly actuated upon by feelings similar to her ladyship's, but chiefly influenced by Vivid's urgent entreaties to be nearer the scene of danger, had, after much consideration, run the risk of thus privately introducing him into the house.

On the physicians calling in the evening, finding their patient much more collected and composed, though still lingering without any probable chance of recovery, they advised Lady Orville to ask her (after they were gone) whether she had any thing to communicate; for they now both confessed that they strongly suspected something preyed upon her mind. On their departure, venturing by slow degrees to make the proposed inquiry, she at length drew from the poor invalid the following reply:

“ No, I die in peace with all mankind: say this to

my dear father, to my kind husband, and also to that companion of my early life, poor Henry —. Ah! I forgot ;—he—he—is in a better world!"

" He! who, my dear Henrietta?" anxiously interrogated Lady Orville—" to whom do you allude?"

" You know too well, generous, tender-hearted friend :—not many hours ago he died—died in a dream! and I—I the fated cause!"

" Heavens! collect yourself.—Who informed you?"

" My father: he received a letter; and the awful tidings were confirmed by the comit, and also by—but spare me! oh! for pity's sake spare me!—my brain, my heart——"

" Hear me, wronged, deceived sufferer, he lives!—But as you may doubt even my word, nurse, throw open that door!—quick!—instantly!—there—listen—who is conversing with my husband?"

" Where?" cried Henrietta (starting up, looking around, and listening). " No! yes! it is that well-known voice, which—— Oh, merciful God! no more—I can bear no more."

Here she burst into a flood of tears, and sunk back so totally exhausted, that Lady Orville, dreading the consequences which might arise from further excitement, at once closed the door, when, after waiting and watching by the bedside for half an hour, the physicians returned, also perceiving (without inquiring into particulars) that she was still more composed, and

certainly a shade or two better than when they left, they determined to give her for the first time a powerful sleeping draught. This remedy having been administered, they took leave for the night. The patient remained in such a calm dozing state for nearly three hours, that she could scarcely be heard to breathe. At the end of that period, about midnight, a moisture appeared on the forehead and the hands; and sleep still continuing, her anxious, sanguine watcher could not resist desiring the nurse to inform Lord Orville and his friend of the disorder having taken such an apparently happy turn. Vivid, who in a state of the most intense anxiety was listening at the door, on hearing the unexpected intelligence, became almost wild with joy; nor was his companion much less affected.

About five in the morning our heroine awakened evidently somewhat refreshed; but being still very weak, confused, and low, she merely asked where she was, and who was in the room; when Lady Orville taking her hand, and warily pressing and kissing it, poor Henrietta expressed her gratitude by a faint and sweet smile, and then sunk again into sleep. Thus passed the night; and the favourable symptoms continuing till the physicians came, they acknowledged, that though they were still far from being assured of her safety, yet they had now some hope of her ultimate recovery.

Lady Orville communicated the report of the phy-

sicians to the two anxious friends; and being alone with them for the first time (since the cause of the mysteribus interview between Lord Carishrook and his daughter had been revealed), she asked them if they did not suspect Lady Ardourly of being the author of that infamous letter, which stated that Vivid had been challenged and killed by one of Captain Morden's friends? They both answered in the affirmative, and added they had no doubt that Count Montnoir and Mrs. Almack, after having been consulted by the agitated father, had spitefully confirmed the atrocious fabrication.

It further appeared that the letter was most artfully written, and sent during the period when Vivid had left London. The signature, also, was very imposing, for it was signed "Horatio Ludlow," a retired officer, distantly acquainted with Lord Carishrook; and the reason given for addressing his lordship was, that he (as father) might break and communicate the fatal intelligence to Lady Henrietta, the writer adding, "that having been unfortunately the second of the surviving principal, he should immediately conceal himself abroad."

However, the arch plotter's triumph was but of short duration, for by the intervention of providence, and the care and exertions of friends, her intended victim so gradually improved, that on the eighth day she was allowed to sit up in her chamber, and on the twelfth

to take an airing. Vivid, by the advice of Lord and Lady Orville, had long ago left the house; and the sympathizing Mrs. and Miss Almack having returned, they were over profuse in congratulating both father and daughter. As to the former, he was so rejoiced at the recovery of his "darling Henrietta," that though Lord and Lady Orville endeavoured to convince him that the letter was an infamous fabrication, he declined, he said, "troubling himself on a subject which he considered to be now totally uninteresting."

Lady Ardourly had heard of the unexpected recovery, but she had not hitherto been able to learn any further particulars. There was little doubt, however, that with her ample means of bribing, and her tact at *espionage*, she would soon be in possession of secrets which might empower her to indulge in additional revenge. At present she was labouring under the clouds of disappointment; and one morning, to add to her confusion, Sir Juniper Jackanape again made his way into the drawing-room.

"How d'ye do, my good Lady Ardourly?—Been on special business at Windsor, or wou'd have called sooner.—Well!—shocking work since we last met—but never mind—although others ent and run, I'm no rat, my dear,—at least not in this house—he! he!"

"Hear me, sir!—do you—*dare* you—come purposely to insult me?"

"*Tout au contraire!*—I come to console you; for

though I think you might have selected, for your new *sidlepiper**—you understand—the Sir Juniper instead of a Mr. Vivid, and though I own at first I was much mortified at having been deposed by this ‘*Gallipot, junior,*’ this rejected farce-writer—yet, recollecting, as the poet says, that to ‘err is human, to forgive divine’—yes—come, I forgive you.” (Offering his hand.)

“ And him, also, I presume (rejecting his hand). But one serious word, sir: when this person hears you call him by these insulting names, do you think *he* will forgive *you*? ”

“ Eh! how? Surely you won’t tell him? ”

“ Why not?—have I not reason? and may I not exclaim, with another poet,

‘ Whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain.’

So now, instead of catching others in your fine-drawn web of ridicule, pray inform me what Sir Juniper himself has caught.”

“ Why—he has caught a Tartar—ha! ha! Excuse me, but you mistake—you do indeed: instead of coming here with any poor quizzing intentions, I came, as I said, partly as a comforter, but chiefly because I hear you propose very shortly setting out for Paris.”

* *Sidlepiper* is a newly coined word, and means one who makes love, *philanders*, or *would be an intriguant*.

"And what then, sir?"

"Why, as my road, my dear, lies the same way, I thought perhaps you would allow me the honour of escorting you. Positively you must not go alone:—no, no, I can't think of allowing that." (Taking snuff.)

This new display of consummate assurance actually struck Lady Ardourly so decidedly dumb, that when the servant announced that her carriage was waiting, she could only answer him by signs. Sir Juniper observing this, and suspecting that the elected *sidelpiper* was appointed to accompany her, wisely declined any present *éclaircissement*, and abruptly bowed and withdrew.

This conduct of Sir Juniper, whose motto evidently appeared to be the vulgar one of "Now she is down, down with her," rendered her more and more enraged; and, rushing into her carriage, she ordered the coachman to drive to her attorney's. When on her way there, to exemplify the truth of the old proverb, "It never rains but it pours," who should pass her in an open barouche and four but Lady Henrietta, looking so healthy and handsome as to produce the directly opposite appearance in her baffled antagonist.

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed.—"Lady Morden!—and thus provokingly!—Well, well, although justice is slow, they shall find it sure."

Arriving at Mr. Wormwood's (her lawyer), she anxiously inquired if he had at length procured any

good news—*i.e.*, any evidence on which she might gain redress for her “unparalleled wrongs;” when, to her great mortification, he answered in the negative.

The fact was, that though he had artfully offered, through one of his clerks, a retaining fee of one hundred sovereigns to Vivid’s *laquais*, and double that sum on his giving satisfactory answers, Sam not only rejected the offer, and haughtily scattered the cash on the floor, but as the corrupt quilldriver stooped to pick it up again, the waggish Alltaet slyly took from amongst his stage properties a chalk-pencil, and wrote in large marking letters on *Mr. Tamperer*’s back the word “SPY;” so that, when he got into the street, every body stared, winked, and tittered, till at length he was surrounded and pushed about by such a crowd, that, if the police had not interfered, he would probably have found himself indulged with a ducking in the Serpentine.

“However,” resumed Mr. Wormwood, “I have reason for hoping to receive better tidings from another clerk, a real spy, whom I have sent to pick up intelligence at the fountain head; and if my fair client will but wait for half an hour, in all probability she will hear from this legal agent’s own mouth a full, true, and, I trust, satisfactory account of what had passed at Carisbrook-house since his lordship had received Captain Lindlow’s letter.”

Her ladyship agreed to the proposal; and in a few

minutes afterwards, on a person's entering the room, she heard Mr. Wormwood say, "Here's the very man!" Then, addressing him, he added—"Now, Litigamus, no delay or legal jargon; speak out plainly, and at once tell us—have you been successful?"

"I flatter myself I have, sir," was the reply.

"What! you won the housemaid by the fifty pounds' bribe?—Eh, Liti?"

"And by certain other valuable bribes called chaste salutes, sir. I beg your ladyship's pardon; I had not the honour of observing you before."

"Oh! no ceremony, sir; it is a commodity I am lately quite unaccustomed to. But proceed, and in a language I can understand."

"Oh, very well, my lady; if you wish an abstract, that is, if you do not desire to have all the counts of the declaration doubly dittoed, such as—Whercas, in the parish and ward aforesaid, he did with his two thumbs scratch and maim said infant; and whereas afterwards, in parish and ward aforesaid, he did, with his *other* two thumbs, scratch——"

"Pooh!" resumed Wormwood, "come directly to the material part of the servant's evidence."

"What!—*et tu, Brute!*—Well! if by dismissing productive technicalities, and taking to the unprofitable *touch-and-go* style, you choose to ruin, or rather to *ca. sa. et fl. fa.* yourself, why—"

"Sir, I insist," interrupted Lady Ardourly—"y's,

sir—sir—that either you communicate the required evidence, or that Mr. Wormwood will *allow* me instantly to seek another solicitor."

The dread of losing one of their best clients made young *Nisi Prius* perceive that in this case common law must give way to common sense, and therefore, with somewhat more rationality, he thus continued:—

"To meet your ladyship's wishes, which of course are ours, we will merely state, that in consequence of Captain H. Ludlow's letter, Lord Carisbrook had a private interview with Lady Henrietta; and though she had been previously only slightly indisposed, yet in a few hours after such interview she was taken alarmingly ill, and remained in imminent danger, till one night—now mark, we come to the very 'head and front' of the evidence—"

"Go on!" hastily cried Lady Ardourly; "facts, facts! no commentaries."

"Why, then, Anna-Matilda (for you know amongst housemaids we have no Pollys or Jennys now) on this important night saw, in Lady Morden's boudoir, a gentleman partially disguised; when said Anna-Matilda, being determined to gratify her curiosity, discovered that aforesaid partially disguised gentleman was no less a personage than—Mr. Vivid!"

"Impossible! she mistook," said Wormwood.

"No! you mistake, sir: she has often seen Mr. Vivid at his lordship's house at Ryde, and is ready to

make an affidavit as to his identity;—ay, and more, sir!—she can swear he remained in said boudoir all night."

With the triumphant grin of a gorgon, Lady Ardourly clasped her hands and exclaimed, "Thank fortune! thank fortune!"

"Oh! I see," rejoined Wormwood, "you mean that all this 'shall to my Lord Burleigh go.'"

"If you allude, sir, to Lord Carisbrook, positively not. Never more will I hold useless communion with that old crippled *Hippopotamus*: no! I will fly at higher game, and with such *materiel*—with 'the hydra of calamities—the sevenfold death,' thus miraculously sent to my aid—see if in a few short weeks——But, first—straight inform me, sir—tell me—when may I expect an answer to a letter sent by this post to Malta?"

"Malta? let me see; why, I think your ladyship might receive a reply in about seven weeks."

"Enough; for the present, good*afternoon; and, in return for your activity, I shall expect you will accept, in addition to other fees, the *douceur* rejected by this redoubtable valet—nay, I insist.—Remember, I came here defeated, baffled, though still with some slight hope of procuring redress. Such hope you have realized; and now, if *jealousy* stir not up amongst them such a flame as I desire, fathers have no pride, husbands no honour, and seducers no courage."

"Oh, ho!" quoth Wormwood, on her leaving the room, "I begin to guess why the scene is to be transferred to Malta. Pray, Liti, isn't Lady Morden's husband cruising in the Mediterranean?"

"True; I now recollect reading in the newspapers that his frigate put into Malta in distress. By Jove! the defendants will not only be fighting in the field, but in Doctors' Commons, the King's Bench, and the House of Lords. Bravo! rare sport for the briefless *black cattle*, and also for your '*gentleman, one,*' &c. But, between ourselves, sir, would *you* think of sending so important a letter by such a precarious messenger as the foreign post?"

"No; I would place it in the hands of some trusty agent."

"To be sure! such as myself, for instance; and, if her ladyship had thought of it, why, after my late success, she would naturally have said, 'Mr. Litigamus, since so many foreign letters miscarry, I should be happy if you could arrange to go yourself to Malta.' To which I should have answered, 'My lady, if Mr. Wormwood will join issue—and if not, why not,' since this deponent knoweth the long vacation is about to commenee."

"True, so it is; and since we've other business on the continent, and, at any rate, since so capital a client as her ladyship ought to have the offer, send for a coach, and we will instantly wait upon her."

Having arrived at Lady Ardourly's, Wormwood communicated to her the cause of this sudden visit. She listened with the greatest attention, and agreed that their plan carried with it three advantages: first, that of safety; secondly, that of despatch; and, thirdly, that of "proof strong as holy writ."

"Certainly, my lady," said Litigamu.; "I can either take with me Anna-Matilda's affidavit, or, by an affidavit of my own on the spot, I could swear to her having made to me such communication."

"Right!" rejoined her ladyship; and always thinking money valueless where a greater interest was concerned, she closed the bargain by agreeing to give Wormwood his own terms. She then finished the letter which she had commenced writing, and having read the contents aloud, asked if they were satisfactory. Both master and clerk answering in the affirmative, she directed it to Captain Morden (with whom it appeared she had formerly been on friendly terms), and then delivered it to her obsequious agent. *

The letter merely recapitulated all the suspicious, or rather *convincing*, circumstances (as the writer expressed herself) before stated; and then "lamenting that it should fall to her lot to communicate such afflicting intelligence, but (giving as a reason) that she felt it to be the duty of a sincere friend no longer to withhold from him such important information," she concluded with "hoping she should soon have the pleasure of seeing him in England."

'Next morning Litigamus started with all his documents, full of hope and exultation, in the steam-packet for Calais, and on the following day his equally exulting fair employer, accompanied by two female friends, set out for Dover. It is true, she was somewhat annoyed at Sittingbourne, by reading in a newspaper that a grand fête, in celebration of Lady Morden's recovery, was shortly to be given at Carisbrook House. However, recollecting the tempest she was about to raise, she became quite willing to allow them the enjoyment of the present partial sunshine, if only for the purpose of securing, by its recoil, a tenfold triumph.

Nothing further occurred till her arrival at Dover, when, walking on the pier, she met Blaise Bronzely; and on her asking him, sarcastically, if he had not altered his character, and become tired of confessing that he was the author of various *peccadillos* which he never had the honour of committing, he replied—

"Yes, in fact, since that foolish admission of mine as to Lady Sensitive, and the truly provoking result."

"What result?" rejoined Lady Ardourly.

"Why, haven't you heard?"

"No, not I; pray inform me."

"Well, then, if you must know, on my return from my morning's ride, *Josselin*, my valet, told me that a basket had been left by a servant in an elegant livery, who said it contained a brace of pheasants, a leash of partridges, and an Epping sucking pig, adding, that his master's name was Captain Smith. 'It must be

some mistake,' I exclaimed, 'for I know no such person. Still, as there may be some explanatory letter inside, open the basket, *Josselin*.' It *was* opened—when, lo!—*parturient montes*—for he found no pheasants or partridges, not one; and instead of a *dead* sucking pig, he beheld an *all alive*, squalling baby, displaying a label on which was written, 'With Lady Sensitive's compliments.'"



Though not used to the smiling mood, Lady Ardourly could not keep a grave countenance.

"‘ Fie ! don’t be so unfeeling,’ continued Bronzely. ‘ Suppose you had been thus hoaxed, what would you have done ?’

“ Why, a child, Mr. Bronzely, is always rather a formidable fixture; but under these circumstances, poor little thing—oh ! no doubt, you kept your word, and literally proved a father to it.”

“ Very likely ! I kept the squalling brat two days, and then deposited it in the Foundling Hospital.”

“ Well, and if you thus persist in boasting of favours you have never received, depend on’t you will have to encounter more hoaxing—ay, and more sucking pigs—at least I hope you will.”

“ Thank you ; and as one good turn deserves another, may you be equally fortunate ! I declare, if I had not good reasons for suspecting that impudent coxcomb, Sir Juniper, who is always indignant at my success, I should guess the basket and its witty contents were dropped by the envious Lady Ardourly.”

Here he made a profound bow, and walked consequentially away ;—

“ None but himself could be his parallel.”

Her ladyship and her companions treating him and his exit with ineffable contempt, returned to the York Hotel, and in the course of the afternoon sailed for Calais, leaving the *paternal* Bronzely at Dover, where he meant to enjoy himself for some days ; but soon

growing tired of lounging in the library, loitering on the pier, and of all the rest of the usual dull sea-side routine, he literally knew so little what to do with himself, that, to kill an hour or two before dinner, he would frequently be seen seated on a tombstone in the churchyard, yawning; staring at the church clock, and comparing it with his own watch; in short, in some degree resembling

“ Patience on a monument.”



CHAPTER X.

Our theatrical tourist in France—A tale not a road-book—The *Diligence*—A French and an Irish passenger—Dramatists “manage better in France”—A beautiful foreigner—Victoire Clarends—“The fiend again.”

VIVID having filled his memorandum-book with traits of character, and sketches of incident, gleaned in his own country, thought it was high time to commence a *professional* tour on the continent: accordingly, he first ordered honest Sam to take two places in a Dover coach; and secondly, to pack up for a journey that would last at least six months. He then took leave of Lord and ‘Lady Orville, and wrote a most affectionate letter to his father, whom he requested to send a line in’ return, and direct it to the Hotel des Bains, Boulogne. Sam, of course, in carrying into execution his master’s orders, did not forget to pack u his *red flame*, *dagger*, and other *stage properties*. Then again he did not forget to crow over the other servants in the hotel, and consequentially to avow he had two

particular reasons for panting for this glorious tour—namely, that he might have the pleasure of seeing more of the world, and that more of the world might have the pleasure of seeing him.

This vain and absurd confession provoked from his hearers contemptuous laughter, which he only noticed by exclaiming—

“*Eh bien !* let those laugh who win; and I leave you all to fatten and batten on your own stupidity. ‘Oh ! there was a Brutus once’—I mean a Queen Anne—when England, like Rome, boasted of its own gay Augustan age ; but now—pooh !—I don’t know what Mr. Vivid may have gleaned in these dull, common-place times ; but if he can produce two original memoranda, why, I can only say, in your own familiar language, ‘he has made a silk purse out of —’ The proverb is somewhat musty, but you understand—hem! *au revoir :*” and he strutted up stairs, leaving them to draw no other conclusion than that he had totally lost his senses.

Although our Thespian *laquais* was right, as far as it related to dramatists, still he might in fairness have added, that the age had proved the very reverse in the case of poets and novelists. Formerly authors of this description never *lived* till they *died*; but now they live, at least till they die ; ay, and many of them live sumptuously : for although Milton only received fifteen pounds for “*Paradise Lost,*” and Oliver Goldsmith a

similar trifle for the "Vicar of Wakefield," yet it is gratifying to state, that of late years living genius of their class has been so highly rewarded, that whilst one poet is said to have received for his various compositions upwards of thirty thousand pounds, a single novelist is reported to have pocketed above a *plumb*. Now, when so many heavy wet placemen and pensioners are preposterously overpaid for doing little or nothing, who is there but must cordially rejoice that this brisk *champagne talent*, as improving as sparkling, is thus handsomely and deservedly remunerated?

But to our travellers, of whom we might state more than that they ascended Shooter's-hill and descended Dartford-hill, and changed horses at the Bull; that they passed through the ancient cities of Rochester and Canterbury; that at the sixty-third mile-stone they saw a road to Folkestone; and that six miles from Dover they actually had a peep at the Castle: but as we are composing a tale, and not a road-book, we trust that our curious readers will allow us to refer them to those two great authorities on the subject—Paterson and Carey. Suffice then to say, that master and man arrived in the evening at Dover, sailed next morning for Boulogne, where (after a stormy voyage of four hours) they landed,

* To prove that at that time dramatic writing was (in the way of remuneration) much above *par*—though Goldsmith was so poorly paid for his novel, he is said to have received for his comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer" eighteen hundred pounds.

and took up their abode at the Hotel des Bains. Poor Sam, having been so dreadfully sea-sick during the whole passage, that he swore he would from this moment perch for ever on French *terra firma*—ay, he would even encounter the horrors of another long revolution, and become a half-starved *detenu* at Verdun, rather than again venture within the clutches of that horrid beast—the *green* monster.

On Vivid's entering the hotel and asking for letters, the waiter presented him with one, on which he saw, to his great gratification, his father's hand-writing; but the contents excited still greater joy, for they consisted of two introductory letters, and a bill on a banker at Paris for one hundred and fifty pounds. This supply was as unexpected as convenient; since, though he did not calculate on expending the whole of it, yet in case of accidents it was highly satisfactory to have such a strong *corps de reserve*. On communicating the news to honest Sam, he found him, even on shore, so sea-sick that, perceiving he could not understand or enjoy the good tidings without some strong stimulant, he ordered him a bumper of *cau-de-vie*; when Sam, either from nervousness or mock delicacy, objecting, and alluding to his constitution, Vivid exclaimed—“Pooh! remember my candid father's maxim—‘If you have a good constitution it will take care of itself, and if you've a bad one, why it is not worth taking care of; so drink, drink!’” Sam obeyed, and thanks to Dr.

Vivid, junior, soon became capable of participating in his master's joy.

Next day a packet was received from Lord Orville, enclosing also introductory letters; and one of which being addressed to Lady Haughtington (the widow of an English baron), residing about two miles from Boulogne, Vivid waited upon her; when, as it sometimes happens on these friendly *transferable* occasions, her ladyship received him very coldly, merely stating that she was very sorry, but as she purposed sailing for England in two or three days, every moment would be so occupied as totally to prevent her having the pleasure of seeing him.

As her friend Lord Orville, however, requested she would be kind enough to give him letters to two or three influential persons in Paris, she told him she would snatch the opportunity of writing one instantly, and would send another in the morning. The epistle accordingly being hastily finished and directed, it was placed in Vivid's hands, who bowed, thanked her, and as hastily departed. Having passed the threshold, and casually casting his eye over the address, to his surprise he read—"To the Countess of Ardourly, Paris." "How!" he exclaimed, "is this accident, or design? I suspect the latter; but my indefatigable Alltact shall ascertain."

No sooner said than done; for, by the aid of his stage properties and his dramatic anecdotes, Sam had

already so won upon an efficient informant, a theatrical *fille-de-chambre*, at the inn, and who was so well acquainted with all the gossip of the town and neighbourhood, that he soon discovered the introductory epistle was *designedly* thus addressed; for it appeared that not a fortnight before Lady Ardourly stopped for a night at the Hotel des Bains; and on leaving it in the morning ordered the postillions to drive to the chateau of Lady Haughtington, where, of course, our hero's character and conduct were sufficiently explained to prepare the enraged widow for giving him a truly *warm* reception.

Vivid bore within him so little of the spirit of revenge, that although he soon afterwards beheld his proud antagonist (Lady Haughtington) equally *cut* and ill-treated, he was literally almost the only looker-on who did not rejoice at her discomfiture. The case was this: on the previous day (Thursday), it appeared, her ladyship had proceeded to the quay with her suite, for the purpose of embarking for England. Her rank and riches thoughtlessly induced her to suppose that there could not be any necessity for *her* producing a passport; but she soon found herself mistaken, for the *douanier* fiercely demanding it, she ordered her valet to present it, when, alas! it wanted "Mr. Premium's name on the back;" in other words, the usual *permit* had not been indorsed on the passport, and the result was, *Monsieur Anti-Jean-Rosbif* would not allow her

ladyship to go on board. No; nothing could induce him to depart from *donanc etiquette*; and away sailed the packet with only the inanimate part of the noble baroness—namely, her luggage.

On the day after, however, she again proceeded to the quay, where the same dog in office accosted her; but being doubly armed—coming prepared with both passport and permit—she consequentially threw them at his feet, saying “*Voila!*” on which he authoritatively exclaimed—“*Ramassez les—tous les deux!*”—*Pické both up—bah!*” This rude command, as may be imagined, only produced a contemptuous smile; but glancing her eye towards the packet, and seeing the captain was about to weigh anchor, and not exactly wishing that the *scena* of the day before should be *encored*, she desired one of her suite to give the necessary *sop* to *Cerberus*; and which order being obeyed, he read the permit; then opening the passport, and muttering the name, his countenance expressed so much astonishment that Lady Haughtington triumphantly cried—

“ So—now you know *whom* you have insulted, no wonder you are thus shocked and surprised.”

“ *Oui*,” he replied; “ *certainement*, I be *surprise*; for *begar!* instead of de *peeresse Anglaise*, me did tink, *tout le temps*, you were *une blanchissuse—ha! ha!*”

Here others joining in the laugh, the important personage strutted up and down, exulting and defying “*tous les barbares Bulls*,” when Vivid and two or three

equally discriminating Englishmen stopped forward, and not only threatened to report this over-insolent conduct to the superior officer, but after their fair country-woman had sailed, actually fulfilled their threat, and *Monsieur Consécutive* was severely fined and reprimanded.

On Lady Haughtington's arrival in London, the first person she visited was her friend Lord Orville, where she discovered that Vivid had been grossly misrepresented by Lady Ardourly; and soon after, having also heard of his spirited behaviour in the *douane* affair, she (in whose composition excess of family pride was the only failing) sent him an explanatory and thankful letter, concluding with hoping that, on his return from his continental tour, she might have the pleasure of becoming his hostess for as many days or weeks as he thought convenient. Thus, in addition to losing what he conceived to be a foe, he gained, what he knew (by a second letter from Lord Orville) to be a friend.

As to Boulogne, and its *Basse-ville*, *Haute-ville*, &c., the truth is, since the termination of the war, it has been so completely converted into Cockhey-land, that any author but a downright book-making one would as soon think of filling pages by describing an *omnibus* tour round Paddington, as a *cabriolet* one round this new John Bull colony. Sterne says, "Englishmen do not travel to see Englishmen;" but were he now travelling, could he avoid their numberless "greetings and salutations in the market-places?"—Impos-

sible!—for if, driven out of France and Italy by this swarm of absentees, he were to take refuge in Egypt or Arabia, they would probably there follow him up again. In the former country he might be forced to join a party of connoisseurs and blue-stockings in mounting the pyramids; and in the latter, hailed on the deserts by an illiterate set of the *ros-bif* family, sitting on the sands, and partaking of Yorkshire ham, Cheshire cheese, and London brown-stout.

Well!—*trahit sua quemque voluptas*,—and if each of these voluntary exiles, who save in taxes at home all they expend in pleasure abroad, were compelled, on leaving Dover, Brighton, or Southampton*, to pay an effective *personal port duty*, the government might soon be enabled to lessen at least the tax on one necessary article—*light*—established years ago by our *curfew-loving* ancestors, who had more motives than one for keeping people *in the dark*.

Becoming heartily tired of the cockney colony, our tourist, at the end of a week, started for Paris in the *Diligence*, in which, to his annoyance, *native* talent was still predominant; so much so, that out of a dozen passengers, three only proved to be Frenchmen. One of them, however, Monsieur N'Entendpas, from the wild department of the Landes, made him some amends; for monsieur had just returned from his first visit to London, and his erroneous descriptions, mis-

* Also in the Thames steamer to Calais, Rotterdam, &c.

nomers, and other blunders, rendered him highly diverting. These *plaisanteries* were partly caused by his provincial ignorance, and partly by his interpreting cicerone (for at first he did not understand ten words of our language) being evidently one of those waggish, hoaxing gentlemen, who, instead of aiding foreigners by explanation, add to their confusion by laughing at their bad English; little considering that if diction and grammar are to be the criterion, and every body is to be quizzed who cannot speak good English, why, probably there will be found as many *foreigners* in Great Britain as on the continent. Amongst other questions, Vivid asked his French fellow-traveller if he knew what a tory was.

"*Oui*," he replied, "he be de vig."

"And pray, monsieur, do you know what a whig is?"

"*Oui*, vig be de tory."

"Ha! ha!—*bon, monsieur!*—and pray, did you ever hear any of this synonymous party speak?"

"*Oui*, in de church—*dans la chapelle de St. Stephen's*—and, *ma foi!* instead of de *religiouse, attentive* congregation, *quel bruit!*—such speak all at once—hear, hear!—*ordre, ordre!*—and such loud laugh! *Et aussi,* clerk, or *quelqu'un*, cry 'Clear de *galerie!*' and den I be so push *en avant et en derrière*, que je squeak comme une douzaine de petits cochons."

"No doubt; but their rules render this hasty pro-

eeding necessary, and, besides, remember they soon allow you to come in again."

"*Certainement, mais pour quel objet?*—only to be push out *encore*."

"Well—but the upper house—the lords—*mon ami*, did you go there?"

"*Oui, me dij;* and dere, *je vois mon seigneur le chancelier, dans full costume de la loi, avec la masse d'or, aussi grand seal de l'Angleterre; trois secretaires dans les habilemens de la cour de chancerie;* and around him *un nombre considerable des personnes avec les chapcaux rondes sur leurs têtes.* *Mais le spectacle le plus grand à mon goût vas vat you eall de bench of peeresses Anglaises in their own right.*—Oh, *superbe!* dans de black and white gown, hair *bien poudré, et lawn sleeves à-la-mode.*"

"The peeresses in their own right, monsieur!—ha! ha!—you mean the hench of bishops."

"*Non, non!*—*Interprète distinctement say,* ‘Old ladies.’"

Here the conversation was interrupted by the diligenee stopping at the dining-plaee, Abbeville; and on their returning, after their repast, to their seats, Monsieur N'Entendpas falling fast asleep, our hero heard no more of his whimsical errors; but he soon found a tolerable substitute in another traveller, an Irish naval lieutenant, who (on one of the French passengers having terminated his journey at the above-mentioned

town) jumped into his place, and commenced conversation in the following strange familiar style.

"Arrah, now, honeys! and you've come thus far, I'm told by the *cocher*, without having met with any accident. Never mind, my pippins! be prepared for a little variety; for now Pat Pillgarlic's on board, yuu're sure to enjoy *some* of the sports u' the field."

"What do you mean, sir?" said a surly old person who sat next to him.

"Why," replied Pill, "what I say, jewel—with me there's so little chance of a dull, uniform jog-trot chase, that if your huge *dili* here were a *safety* one, give it forty miles, and smash!—over she goes!"

"Oh! I comprehend," said Vivid: "Mr. Pillgarlic is an unlucky traveller."

"And, by the powers! now you've hit it, honey! so completely an unlucky one, that the jontleman whom in this world I have the greatest regard for—maning myself—never yet turned fifty miles without a turn-up, my darlings—ay, and having the pleasure of seeing all his chums spilt with him."

"Indeed!" said the surly old passenger; "then, if you had common feeling, you would stay on board ship, and not——"

"And wouldn't I if I could, old Botherum?—But where's the admiral or captain who has not found out that Pill would sink a navy?—Why, haven't you heard that on my last voyage, in the Thunderer sloop—though

she had fine weather till I joined at Gibraltar, yet in a few hours after, to be sure, didn't such a hurricane spring up, that down she went? Oeh! till-a-lu! till-a-lu!—don't flatter yourself, old *Sable Silver-head*, for on sea and on shore Pat's aqually a sure card."

However, in this instance, the unlucky lieutenant proved to be out in his reckoning, for they went forty—sixty—nay, a hundred miles, and the cry being still, "All's right!" whilst his fellow passengers crowded over him, and ridiculed such superstitious absurdities, he preserved a grand silence, his countenance at the same time betraying more of surprise and disappointment than of satisfaction or joy. At length, having passed Chantilly, and safely arrived within a league of the gates of Paris, poor Pillgarlic became more and more the butt of the whole party, and consequently more and more chapfallen; but, lo! just at that moment, as if fate determined consistently to follow up her victim to the last, the ponderous top-heavy vehicle tottered, reeled, and, with a tremendous crash, fell to the ground; when (strange to relate!), in the midst of the screaming and cries of "Help! help!" one voice was heard thus sounding forth above the rest—

"Sing didderoo, bubberoo, whack, langolee!"

And before the fact could be ascertained, as to what number of passengers had been injured, the aforesaid songster stood erect on the *pavé*, waving his hat, shouting and exclaiming—

"Now—now, who's a sure card, jewels?—There!—arrah! by the powers! let this be a lesson to you!—

'Sing didderoo, bubberoo, whack, langolee!'



However, being naturally humane, his exultation soon ceased, and he rendered every assistance to those who had met with accidents. Fortunately few were injured, and those but slightly; though the overset

(caused by a pile of stones, which, from the darkness of the night, the drivers had not seen) was at once as severe as sudden. Our hero and most of the other travellers walked on to Paris, amongst the rest Pill-garlic, who having entertained them with an account of his continued ill-luck from infancy, concluded by saying, “I only wonder I haven’t long ago put an *existence* to my life.” On arriving in the metropolis Vivid took up his abode at the Hotel d’Angleterre, and for a very good reason—it was near five theatres.

In the morning early he commenced operations; and in the course of the day, after having killed half a dozen lions, such as the Louvre, the Tuilleries, &c. he went to the Theatre Français, where he saw Kotzebue’s play of the “Stranger,” and sat next to a Frenchman, who related the following curious anecdote:—“Madame Molé,” said he, “who translated ‘Misanthropy and Repentance’ (the ‘Stranger’) rather in a careless way, is already in possession of a property of *sixty thousand livres*, and even now this play is frequently performed in every theatre in France. To KOTZEBUE, its AUTHOR, the sum total brought by this piece never exceeded *two hundred German dollars**.”

* This odd circumstance is thus accounted for:—The author or translator of every theatrical piece in France is remunerated in the following most liberal manner: every night’s receipts are divided into three parts, of which the author receives (throughout the kingdom) a *seventh of one-third*, and this sum is paid to

Vivid next morning began to think of profiting by his letters of recommendation. Amongst others received from Lord Orville was one, which being addressed to the Countess of Montpelier, he paid her a visit, and having been warmly received, and invited to a ball on the same evening, he cheerfully accepted the invitation. At the time appointed, entering the drawing-room of the countess's splendid mansion, he saw, according to modern French fashion, a crowd of admirers, so staring at and surrounding *one* lady, that she appeared to be almost suffocated ; whilst the other ladies had at least the gratification of not being incommoded by heat or pressure, since nobody took the slightest notice of them. This "observed of all observers" proved to be Victoire Clarens, daughter of the noble hostess, and by far the most handsome female in the party.

Our hero being of course a stranger to the beautiful Victoire, the countess, in the true spirit of *etiquette*, did not neglect introducing him ; and though he was considerably awed by her extraordinary personal attractions (inferior in his conception only to Lady Morden's), yet he contrived to summon up sufficient courage to beg he might have the honour of dancing with her ; when, to his great gratification, she instantly consenting, he (to the mortification of the Parisian *bedux*) led her off in him as long as he lives, and to his heirs ten years after his death ; an office being purposely established at Paris, where the author, on paying two per cent., is sure of receiving his money.

la'gavotte. "Thus far he sailed before the wind;" but it suddenly tacked, and blew around him a hurricane. The directress of the storm proved to be Lady Ardourly, who, in spite of her supposed successful machinations, on beholding him thus again noticed and favoured, became so enraged that she took the noble hostess aside, and informed her that this conspicuous guest was a very improper person for her daughter to dance with; adding that, if her word were doubted, she could refer the countess for his real character to one of her most intimate friends, namely, Lady Haughtington.

"How!" replied the surprised hostess, "is it possible? But as I can have no reason whatever for doubting your word, and you add that my old confidential friend, Lady Haughtington, will also say that he is not a fit person to mix in our society, why—"

"She *has* said it. Not three weeks ago, at Boulogne, her ladyship assured me she had forbidden him her house; be kind enough, therefore, only to make the accusation, and if he dare to deny it, call me to prove that he adds falsehood to effrontery."

"Enough!" rejoined the countess, and haughtily beckoning Vivid, she drew him aside. "A word in private, if you please, sir. So, I have just discovered that I am imposed upon; and, to say the least, that you have entered my house under false colours. Therefore I insist that you instantly take your leave for ever."

"Heavens, madam! and pray, on what authority am I thus basely slandered?"

"First on the authority of Lady Ardourly."

"Lady Ardourly!" replied Vivid, and smiled contemptuously, whilst the countess thus continued:

"Come, sir, no impertinent insinuations, for with me her ladyship's word would have alone been sufficient; but, as additional proof, what think you of such evidence as Lady Haughtington's? Ay! and therefore at once confess that at Boulogne she forbade you her house."

"She did; but here"—(hastily producing his pocket-book and taking out a letter)—"look—you know, I presume, her ladyship's hand-writing?"

"To be sure I do."

"Mark, then; is this a forgery?" (giving her the letter.)

"Certainly not. I know both hand and seal."

"Very well: then, madam, if you wish to do me justice, read the contents, and decide for yourself."

The countess assented, and read as follows:

"London, May 15.

"SIR,

"WHEN I commit an error, I am happy, nay proud, to acknowledge it; and on my arrival in London, having ascertained from my friends Lord and Lady Orville, that your character has been grossly and wil-

fully misrepresented by Lady Ardourly, I take the earliest opportunity of apologising for the rude reception which I unfortunately gave you, and likewise of sincerely thanking you for your gallant and generous conduct in the *douane* affair.

“ Hoping, if, on your return from Paris, you should again visit Boulogne, that you will be good enough, during your stay, to make my house your home, .

“ I have the honour to be, &c.

“ H. HAUGHTINGTON.

“ To Henry Vivid, Esq.”

During the perusal of this letter the countenance of the countess frequently reddened with anger, and at the conclusion, taking her wronged guest by the hand, and replacing him in the seat next her daughter, she made him a low courtesy, asked his pardon, and proceeded in search of what she now called his calumniator, and whom she found waiting for her, all hope and exultation.

“ Well, noble hostess !” was the familiar salutation.

“ Well, Lady Ardourly !” was the ceremonious reply. “ I’ve seen this person who you say is an improper partner for my daughter, and I am satisfied—quite satisfied.”

“ To be sure; you knew your dear friend would not deceive you.”

“ What dear friend ? Oh, Lady Haughtington ! right,

she has not, deceived me. No, no; that dear friend has not deceived me."

"How? Where? Surely you have not seen her?"

"No, but I have seen her hand-writing; and pray ask this person, whom you will find sitting next my daughter, for the sight of a letter, dated London, May 15th, directed to Henry Vivid, Esq., and written by Lady Haughtington herself. Yes, madam, and in which she not only apologises for her unjust treatment, but warmly invites him to her house and——"

"Pooh! ridiculous! and allow me to add, that the Countess of Montpelier is the last person who ought to attempt to impose on one of her old acquaintances such preposterous——"

"Hold! though that old acquaintance has attempted to impose on me, I scorn to copy her example; but beg her to understand, I am so convinced of the decided genuineness of the letter, that I shall henceforward feel myself bound not only to receive this interesting young Englishman as Lord Orville's friend, but also as Lady Haughtington's."

"Then, madam, you will no longer receive Lady Ardourly; who, congratulating you on this valuable acquisition to your correct and select society, calmly takes her leave—yes, and for ever."

The word "calmly" being absurdly inapplicable, every body who saw her rush out of the room could scarcely refrain from laughter. But this new defeat

on her part, and triumph upon Vivid's, obviously added such fuel to the former flame, that for a time she became mad enough to confess that nothing but his ruin or his death could satisfy her resentment. Still this communication was only made to a few female friends, and who advised her to confine it to their small circle, reminding her of Seneca's observation:—

“ Hatred, when declared, loses its opportunity of revenge.”



CHAPTER XI.

Gambling rendered more dramatic—"When the wine's in, the wit's out"—Five's the main—"Ditto repeated"—A French prison—A kind confidante, and the Champs Elysées.

OF one ruling passion our hero was almost totally ignorant, a passion which he knew had been often dramatically handled; but being in the city where it reigned in all its glory, and hoping it might be managed in a new way, he resolved to visit *Frascati's* and the *salon*. Dining one day at the latter, he sat next to a Frenchman, Count Survenant, who claimed acquaintance with him; and Vivid recollecting having met him at Lord Orville's, they entered into a free chain of conversation, when this wily count, "putting an enemy into the mouth to steal away the brains," the *novice* became so intoxicated, and played with such desperation, that he soon lost the whole of the money his father had given him.

"Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind," for the count followed him into the supper-room, where, after persuading him not "to give in," he artfully induced him to accept a loan of two hundred pounds,

and for which our deluded and bewildered hero gratefully gave a promissory note, payable on demand. On returning to *Pandemonium*, the *arch tempter* (Count Survenant) took the hazard-box, and setting thirty napoleons, called "Five's the main!"—he won; called "Five's the main!" again; and so on, till having called and thrown in the same main ten times, he put into practice his old *rookery ruse*, i. e. he shammed ill, and after fainting and falling, a *fiacre* was sent for, in which he departed, leaving behind, in addition to our poor "Beverley," a score of other plucked pigeons.

To add to Vivid's afflictions, a notary called next morning, and peremptorily informed him that if the cash for the promissory note were not forthcoming by six o'clock, an attorney would that night place the defaulter within the bars of St. Pelagie. What was to be done? Without friends, without money, the only alternative that presented itself was to inquire of the landlord of the hotel if he could point out any person who had sufficient influence over Count Survenant to induce him to wait till letters could be received from England. The kind-hearted *aubergiste* answered in the affirmative, and added, that such influential person was a native of Vivid's own country.

"Indeed! so far so well," was the reply.

"Nay! do not be too sanguine, nor suppose that, individually, I can assist you with one so much my superior, as the Countess of Ardourly."

"Lady Ardourly! Heavens! I see it all—he is her minion—parasite——"

"Why, pretty nearly so, for they say he understands her wishes before she utters them."

Here Vivid determined upon letting fate take its course, and exclaimed, "When the law authorities arrive, I will willingly accompany them." At the appointed hour they did arrive, and payment of the note being again vainly demanded, they conducted their silent, unfortunate victim within the walls of St. Pelagie.

The prison being as full as the poor prisoner's pockets were empty, when he asked where was his apartment, one of the "dogs in office" gruffly replied "There!" and pointing to the bare stones, abruptly left him to his fate.

Alone—night coming on—and a thick, drizzling rain having nearly wetted his clothes through, he could no longer bear up against the struggle, and, overcome with agitation and exhaustion, he was compelled to recline against the wall, when at this moment his faithful chum, Alltaut, appeared, and with tears in his eyes informed him, that if his sufferings could be alleviated by a well-aired room and a good supper, they had been secured by an unknown well-wisher.

Vivid, who had too much pride to accept favours from any but particular friends, and aware that he had none in Paris, refused to accept the offer, when, after much vain entreaty, the faithful fellow exclaimed—

"He, sir, who has procured for you these small comforts will, by their acceptance, consider the favour conferred on him; and though he feels he dare not aspire to the name of friend, yet, if the most sincere, heartfelt attachment, resulting from obligations conferred by the best of masters, can warrant——"

"*You, Alltact*—from *you*, these unexpected gifts! why?—how?—let me understand—where did you procure the means?"

"Don't, sir,—pray do not now inquire—you shall know all hereafter—but"—clapping his hand on his breast—"honestly—I earned it honestly, depend on't. Come, sir,—nay, I insist—see, the rain falls in torrents—you cannot, shall not, thus risk your health, perhaps your life."

Here, leading him impereceptibly along, he entered a small, comfortable chamber, where, after partaking of refreshments, our hero passed a night of comparative repose.

Next day, avoiding the other prisoners, he remained alone, when in the evening Sam announced a stranger, who proved to be an English fellow-sufferer on the memorable gambling night. His motive for this visit was to advise Vivid not to pay one farthing of Count Survenant's debt, since it was notorious that no court of law would compel the payment of what had been fraudulently obtained; and, "Look!" added the kind stranger, "here is the evidence. You see these dice

—throw them one hundred times, and the figure ‘five’ will never come uppermost—no; it will always reel sidewise or undermost—you understand.”

“I do,” rejoined Vivid, “they are loaded; but what then? unless this charge can be brought home to the deep contriver; and ah! I fear——”

“Fear nothing. A principal proprietor, the groom-porter, and myself can positively bring the charge home; for we can all swear we saw him accidentally drop these dice during his pretended indisposition, and therefore, once in your possession, you are safe. There! take them, and success attend you!”

Vivid, after heartily thanking his kind informant, sent for an *avocat*, and the result was, that, on hearing the facts, he said that he had no doubt but the two conspirators (for it *was* a conspiracy), on being threatened with a prosecution in the *Tribunal de Première Instance*, would readily consent to hush up so dangerous an affair. This proved to be the case (for Lady Ardent, with all her love of revenge, had not forgotten the love of *self*), and the note being given up, the released prisoner returned to his hotel, and wrote letters to England. He also induced Sam to confess that he had procured the room and supper by means of a few sovereigns which he had put by for “a rainy day.”

Although the liberal landlord had volunteered supplying them with board and lodging until better times arrived, yet the “art of their necessities was so

strange," that they could not raise money sufficient to allow them to enter the theatres. Vivid, therefore, occasionally wandered in the evening about the *Champs Elysées*, where, amongst other odd exhibitions, he would sometimes see a priest in full canonicals seated on a bench close to a *fille-de-chambre*, with whom he was flirting; and also a rough, sturdy porter, with his ticket and apron, pulling off his cocked hat, ogling and offering a pinch of snuff to a coquettish vender of lollipops. In short, till he received letters, his sole object was, where he could best kill time *gratis*.



CHAPTER XII.

An affectionate father—The Carisbrook party at Paris—An old *foe* with a new face—News from Malta—More attempts and more failures—*Table d'hôte*—A wet jubilee, and a most curious wager.

Six days had now elapsed, and yet Vivid had received no letters from England; and when he again reflected that the only bank he could draw on was his father's, he naturally felt less hope than ever of receiving favourable intelligence. However, at length the important day arrived, and a letter being brought, superscribed in the doctor's hand-writing, Vivid eagerly tore it open, and read as follows:—

" Ryde, Sept.

" I have only time to say that, much as your letter surprised me, mine will astonish you much more; for, as a proof wonders will never cease, I have made money by my Chancery suit. Ten days ago, a decree having been given in my favour, my solicitor, on the strength of it, advanced me five hundred pounds. Now, though I ought to give you a severe curtain-lecture, and certainly will when I see you, yet, in the mean,

time, I forward to you half of the above sum, and the other half I shall vest in our joint names ; so that it may be forthcoming when either of us have unfortunately our brains puzzled, and our pockets picked.

“ Your affectionate father,

“ G. VIVID.”

This generous, munificent epistle proved at first too much for the agitated reader, and, bursting into tears, he sank back in his chair ; for, in addition to his being overpowered by heartfelt gratitude, he felt those compunctions scruples which ever present themselves when we receive kindnesses we know we do not deserve. Soon, however, partially recovering, he wrote a most affectionate reply.

And now, patient readers, since some of you may wish to know what is become of our heroine, her father, and her husband, we will return for a short time to England.

Lady Henrietta and Lord Carisbrook had both received letters from Captain Morden, in which he had stated that the repairs of his frigate were so extensive that it would be still impossible for him to sail for England for many months ; he therefore now seriously entreated them to take advantage of the present favourable time of year, and join him at Malta, promising of course to pilot them home again. Lord Carishbrook, who had never visited the continent, felt

a strong latent desire for beholding France and Italy; and would more than once have started with all speed, had not his old inflammatory antagonist pulled the check-string. However, having for some time “defied the foul fiend,” and thinking that the tour would prove equally as interesting to Lady Henrietta as to himself, he one morning at breakfast thus suddenly proposed it to her.

“ Well, my dear child, since the mountain cannot come to Mahomet, what say you to Mahomet’s going to the mountain?—You understand me.—What think you of a trip to Paris, Rome, Naples, and last, not least, to Malta?”

“ Why, my lord, as it seems to be the wish of those whom it is my desire as well as my duty to obey, certainly, if my dear father’s health will allow him to accompany me.”

“ It will, it *shall* allow him!—and now, ere another week is past: but as we know nothing of French roads, French inns, and French customs, it will not be prudent to encounter this long and difficult journey alone; and therefore, since we must have a conductor, or, to use fine continental language, a *cicerone*, why who so proper as my friend Count Montnoir?”

“ How, my lord?—I beg your pardon. I grant we need such a person as you describe; yet is the count the only foreigner you can select?”

“ Certainly not, Henrietta; but show me one in

whom I can place such confidence.—No, no, my friend Montnoir is the man. Besides, you will have your own *chaperon* in cousin Almack, who, having often urged the propriety of your joining your husband, I have no doubt, will rejoice to accompany us."

This assertion proved to be correct; for her daughter having lately been married to Sir Henry Recfley, Mrs. Almack, being so far freed from maternal responsibility, had no longer any reason for not indulging in her second favourite amusement, travelling.

As to Lord Orville, immediately after Lady Henrietta's recovery (anticipating that some base and calumnious reports relative to his friend Vivid and the *boudoir* affair might be forwarded to Malta), he had written a long explanatory letter to Captain Morden, but, naturally, as a sufficient period had not elapsed, no answer could for some time be expected.

Now, reader, again reminding you that we are writing a tale and not a road-book, we will at once deposit Lord Carisbrook and his party at Meurice's Hotel, Paris, which Count Montnoir recommended because he said his noble patron would there meet many of his English acquaintances; and he said truly—too truly; for, on the first evening, whom should his lordship encounter on the staircase but his old friend Lady Pamper? This was all very well; but the idea of being once more within "the wind and wbuff" of Sir Pet, gave his lordship two or three such

sharp twinges that he could hardly utter a common civil expression. Having heard, however, that his tormentor was not in Paris, the old peer became himself again, and cheerfully conducted her ladyship into his daughter's apartment.

Lady Pamper, who seemed to be in a declining state of health, avoided answering, as much as possible, all questions relative to her son; but as nothing could subdue the curiosity of Mrs. Almack and Lord Curisbrook, she at length confessed she was sorry to say that, on his recovering from his indisposition, he so completely lost all sense of feeling that, after a severe conflict on her part, she was compelled to part from him at Naples.

The only one who showed any pity for this unfortunate mother was Lady Henrietta, and who, on inquiring the particulars of her journey, was shocked to find that, amongst other accidents, owing to the obstinacy of her son, she had been seized by brigands and forcibly carried to their cavern. At Nice the travellers had been advised not to take the road to Genoa, as it was infested with swarms of these bandits; but though the mother agreed to profit by the kind warning, the son, with his usual love of opposition, persisted in taking the proscribed route, and gave no other reason than that though *some* people had not the taste to wish to see the scenery on the Mediterranean coast, *others* had—in short, “Wilful would do’t.”

Still, however, with one saving clause, selfishly and secretly making up his mind to travel only by daylight, he fancied himself pretty secure; but he soon found he had made a wrong calculation, since near Remo, in the broad glare of noon, the carriage was surrounded by a number of armed Russians, who having first robbed it of all its valuables, next bore off their victims to a cavern in the mountains, where the captain put a rope round the waist of each of them, the ends of which he firmly grasped in his hand whilst he sat at his supper.

"Heavens!" cried Lady Henrietta; "and thus secured, in what manner did you escape?"

"Why," replied Lady Pamper, "by the most singular circumstance. You must know, that in my son's large dressing-case (which, amongst other travelling apparatus, they carried off) there were two handsome cut glass pint decanters, filled with liquids both pleasant to the flavour and the scent, namely, two powerful *anti-freckle* cosmetics, which, though possibly beneficial as *lotions*, were certainly most injurious as *potions*—at least, from the unwholesome nature of the ingredients, so they proved in this instance; for after supper in the cavern, the captain and the three or four followers, remaining with him, taking out the stoppers, and conceiving they were drinking a rich, almond-like liqueur, rapidly half emptied the decanters, when suddenly such face-making, stupor, and giddiness ensued,

that the captain's four chums shortly staggered and fell to the ground, whilst he himself——”

“ What! did the chief escape?” inquired Mrs. Almack.

“ No: he soon followed his brother brigands; when I, who had anxiously watched him, joyfully beheld the rope drop from his hand.



“ Instantly I roused my son, who, for once, not refusing to take advice, fled, even before me.”

" Of course," exclaimed Lord Carisbrook, " acting up to his usual motto—the devil take the hindmost."

" Nay, I soon came up with him; and the night fortunately proving very dark, we wandered unnoticed during the whole of it. On the approach of morning we concealed ourselves in a wood, and remained there all day: towards midnight, almost famished, we set forth again, and at dawn we were gratified by beholding the spires of Genoa, which city having soon after entered, we procured money on our general letter of credit, and continued our journey."

" And pray," rejoined Lady Henrietta, " did misfortune work no change in your son's disposition?"

" None, alas! none; and at last, fearing ——"

" Mess! that's my ease," peevishly cried the old peer. " I never knew what fear was till I knew this Sir Pet, but now I own I so dread the sight of the horrid animal, that if I stumble upon him in Italy, I will run from him as I would from a mad bull."

So much for maternal toil, trouble, affection, &c. Though Benedict says " The world must be peopled," still Benedict does not say it should be peopled only with such *pests* as Sir Pet. If it were, the days of King Herod would probably not remain quite in such bad odour, and moralizers would read in the newspapers the announcements under the head of " Births" with equal if not more sympathy than those under the head of " Marriages and Deaths."

"As to maternal feeling," said Mrs. Almack, "I only know I have not received one line from my daughter, Lady Reefley, since she married.—And what then?—If I never receive another line, shan't I eat, sleep, dance, and sing as well as ever?"

Count Mentnoir never troubled himself about the matter; and whilst his uniform *politesse* rendered him hourly more popular in the eyes of his patron and Mrs. Almack, the person whom he most wished to please still maintained towards him her usual cold repulsive manner; consequently, whilst he openly expressed his vexation, he secretly cherished his indignation. No wonder, then, on hearing of Vivid's gambling losses, that he (the count) exaggerated the tale to Lord Carisbrook. As may be imagined, he took good care to narrate it, with emendations and additions, in the presence of Lady Morden, who was forced silently to hear, not only from this specious count, but from her credulous father and his prejudiced cousin, the grossest attacks on the character of a man whom she still believed to be perfectly innocent.

"I hope the fellow is not now in Paris," muttered Lord Carisbrook.

"*Oui*, but he is, my lord."

"I declare, then," exclaimed Mrs. Almack, "I really wish, count, you would make interest with the police to get this reprobate voted a spy, and consequently sent out of the country."

"*Bon ! bonne idée ! nous verrons.*"

Dinner being announced, the conversation terminated; and his lordship having no wish to renew what he called so disagreeable a subject, our heroine was for the present spared from further annoyance, at least as far as related to the calumniated Vivid.

The count, however, brooding over Lady Henrietta's conduct, and becoming daily more and more disappointed and chagrined, resolved one way or other to seek such redress as would for ever humble "this grand haughty beauty." Acting on this impulse, and wisely considering that two heads were at all times better than one, he paid Lady Ardourly a visit; when she received him most cordially, confessing that she required no other introduction than the knowledge of his being the decided foe of Mr. Vivid and his *honourable* allies; and then revealing to him the whole arrangement relative to Litigamus's journey to Malta, the count congratulated her, and agreed that there was no doubt of her ultimate and complete triumph.

On his inquiring when his noble confederate thought it likely she should hear the result of this interesting Maltese mission, she replied, that she expected every day either to see or hear from her agent; but she requested the count not to communicate one word of what had passed, or in the slightest degree prepare Lady Morden for the approaching storm. "No!" she cried; "let it burst upon her like a thunderbolt!"

One morning soon after this visit the servant informed Lady Ardourly a person of the name of Litigamus was waiting in the hall. "Show him up instantly! instantly!" was the reply; and rushing to meet him at the top of the stairs, she herself ushered him into the drawing-room.

"Now," she exclaimed—"the news! the news!"

"Presently, your ladyship; for I have been so hurried and flurried—pray, pray allow me just to gain breath:—pheugh!"

"Well!—there—that will do; now—you arrived at Malta? and saw the injured husband?"

"Yes."

"And gave him my letter?"

"Yes."

"And did he not swear he would revenge his wrongs?"

"He did, my lady."

"Oh! I knew how well you would perform your duty:—thanks—thanks!—And, no doubt, he too being thankful, you were received far, far beyond your expectations."

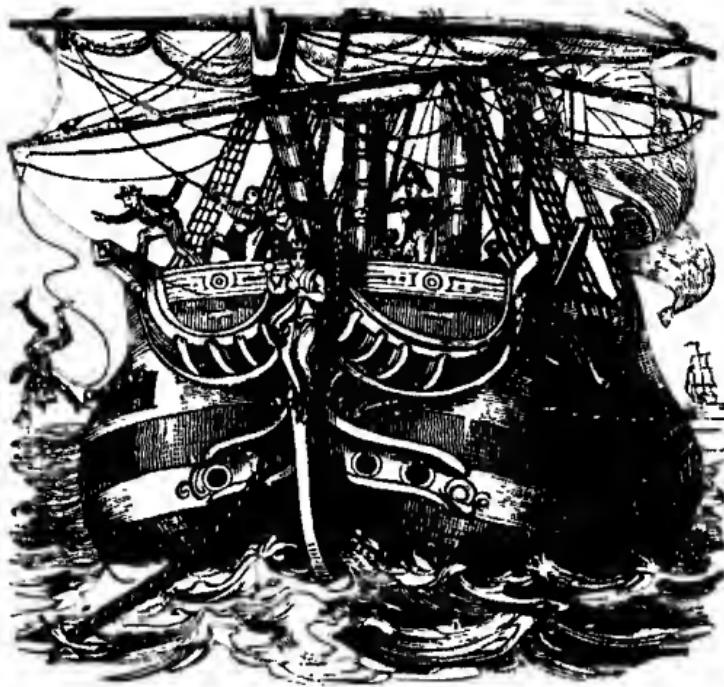
"Ay—very far; for though I thought I might not meet with an over-warm reception, yet I certainly did not expect such a decidedly *cool one*."

"A cool reception!—what!—do you mean to say he threw any cold water on my zealous proceeding?"

"I mean to say he threw *me* into *cold water*, for d—n me if he did not duck me!"

"How!—impossible!"

"Not at all; I say he actually ducked, souised me over and over: but you shall hear. On showing your letter, and narrating the whole case, Captain Morden appeared to believe every syllable; but this proved to be only a false appearance, a sham plea, since next day, by invitation, I visited his frigate, when instantly the sailors lashed a long rope round me, and throwing me headlong into the sea, jerked me up and down like a perch or a jack with the line fast in his mouth."



· And this by Captain Morden's orders!"

" Ay; and in vain I sputtered for pity. However, at last they dragged me upon deck, and, for their own sakes, rubbed life into me. But do they suppose that's *tanti*?—No—see if I don't commence such a legal cannoneade: *imprimo*, general indictment for conspiracy; *secundo*, separate *nisi prius* shots for assaults; *tertio*, crown office, and *ex officio*—"

" Go on, sir—proceed; and intelligibly, I insist, or else—"

" Well, your ladyship, in the evening they lowered me into their long boat, and rowed me to the coast of Sicily: there they left me; when next day I sailed in a French vessel bound for Marseilles; and from that city, in short, spite of wind, weather, and finny plaintiffs above and below water, here I am."

" And here I am, sir, surrounded by fools, knaves, and conspirators, all linked together; but, were your number tenfold—"

" Lord, madam! is it my fault that Captain Morden believed his friend Lord Orville's evidence in preference to ours?"

" Lord Orville's evidence!"

" Yes, my lady: he anticipated us in an explanatory letter, which was received before I arrived, so that the captain being quite prepared to discredit our charges, your ladyship's bill was ignored, and mine—remains to be paid."

"And yet, sir, you pretend he swore he would revenge his wrongs!"

"To be sure he did, but not those committed by his wife; no, wrongs committed by you and your agents. Never mind, though—they can only bring an action for defamation; and by subpoenaing me and Anna Matilda, let their witnesses *bolt* ever so much, our plea of justification —"

"Leave the room, sir," cried Lady Ardourly; and ringing the bell, poor Litigamus saw he had no alternative but to obey: yet wisely foreseeing that when her rage had passed over she might wish to hold further communication with him, he left his address with the servant. What he had supposed would happen did soon occur; and, jointly with the count, meetings were frequently held in close divan.

As to Lady Henrietta, she still remained wholly ignorant of the Maltese mission; for though Captain Morden, in a letter written evidently *after* Litigamus's departure, "requested her to *beware* of Lady Ardourly," yet he made no other allusion to the subject, delicately considering that the disclosure of such calumnious charges would only unnecessarily distress her and her father. However, in his letter to Lord Orville he avowed that on his arrival in England, so much did he despise the silly system of confounding vice and virtue, that whilst he should more than ever prove himself

attached to the accused, he should, to the utmost extent of his power, punish her infamous accuser.

Lady Ardourly's predicted "thunderbolt," therefore, not having fallen on our heroine, she could plead no excuse for refusing to accept an invitation to a *sûte* given by Lord Orville's friend, the Countess of Montpelier. By Lord Carisbrook's desire, the count, as well as Mrs. Almack, accompanied her. On arriving at the magnificent mansion, the countess and her lovely daughter received Lady Henrietta in the most marked and cordial manner; whilst (in consequence of a late private communication from Lord Orville) they merely gave to Mrs. Almack a formal reception and to the Count Moutnoir a decidedly cold one.

Still self-satisfied, the dowager tossed up her head and hummed a tune; nor did this impudent Frenchman's full-blown bladder of vanity receive the least puncture, till the beautiful Victoire Clarens scornfully refused to join him in the dance. On this he appealed to her mother, and stated that the young lady's conduct was quite irregular; and unless she could prove she had been previously engaged, he considered that —

"Then, sir," replied the irritated countess, "she is previously engaged, and here is the proof—here is the partner of her own free choice, *my* friend, Mr. Vivid."

"*Ma foi!* Lady Ardourly's *tonnerre*—de dunderbolt

do fall on *my bead*.—*Mais—où, où est mon amie Almack?*" and off he scampered in pursuit of her.

They of course made sure that when the Countess of Montpelier, one of the most correct, punctilious ladies in Paris, heard the gambling and the prison stories, she would for ever close her doors against this "*low roué*." Yet here again they were disappointed, for the countess *had* heard these stories; and knowing the whole of the particulars, she at once exclaimed, "I am more than ever convinced that this young Englishman may boast of being quite as fit society for me and my daughter as many persons now around him." Here, taking by the hand Lady Henrietta (who stood next to her, and had been highly gratified in hearing a wronged friend thus vindicated), she made the count and Mrs. Almack a ceremonious courtesy, and retired.

Lord Carisbrook's late renewed attack, in his daughter's presence, on our hero's character, rendered it necessary, she conceived, to repress the anxiety she naturally now felt towards personally congratulating him; and therefore she only gave him, as he passed in the dance, a most kind and friendly salutation, expressing at the same time by a heartfelt smile, that she warmly rejoiced at seeing him thus justly esteemed and honoured.

After the dance Vivid flew in "search of her, but in vain: she had prudently retired in the countess's car-

riage, under the protection of her servants, leaving the mortified *duetto* to follow at their pleasure. On her arrival at the hotel, she easily persuaded her father that slight indisposition was the cause of her abrupt departure; whilst her enemies, next morning at breakfast, deeming it politic to keep their defeat to themselves, Lord Carisbrook knew nothing of what had occurred on the previous evening.

Now, ye modern saints! ye prudish young and old maids! who regularly reprobate in others what ye find excuses for practising in yourselves—and ye! ye adulterated married ladies, who

" Stay out all night, but take especial care
That prudence brings you back to early prayer—"

will you allow a youthful married woman to indulge even in the wish (notwithstanding she restrains herself from fulfilling such wish) of personally congratulating an honourable young man on his proud but unexpected triumph over fraud, calumny, and conspiracy? No you will say, "It is absolutely shocking! and wives with such tendencies as Lady Morden exhibits should not be permitted to visit *any of us*." Granted: but does she wish to visit *any of us*? Certainly not; for standing highly in her father's and husband's esteem, and consequently in her own, she towers far above such poor dissembling caballers.

The impression made on Vivid, in consequence of

Lady Henrietta's generous conduct, sunk so deeply into his heart, that it seemed as if it would remain engraved there for ever. Still, delightful as the recollection proved to be, it carried with it some alloy, and induced him to begin to feel that he ought to avoid a course which certainly it was as absurd as dishonourable to pursue. Such seriously becoming his determination, he purposely kept himself for four days in his chamber, where, to amuse his mind, he stored his memorandum-book with so much new *materiel*, that he actually drew out a sort of skeleton of his intended comedy. On the fifth day, finding himself in better spirits, he dined at the *table d'hôte*, where he met his old acquaintance, Sir Juniper Jackanape, and with him another Englishman—Mr. Blase Bronzely.

These two “gladiators in dialogue” (as Dr. Johnson calls Congreve and Vanburgh) so completely took the lead, and kept the conversation so entirely to themselves, that the whole party, except *one*, openly expressed their irritability; but when it turned out that the cause of this individual’s silence and composure was a total loss of hearing, Sir Juniper thus interrupted his fellow-countryman in the middle of one of his stories.

“ Blasc, why don’t you lend the poor deaf old boy your ears? you know you never ‘use them.”

“ Come, Juniper,” replied Bronzely, “ for once let me finish a story. Well, gentlemen, as I was say-

ing, when I saw at Stratford-upon-Avon the Shaksperean procession pass in the street, it rained so violently that Caliban and Hamlet's Ghost carried umbrellas, whilst Ophelia——”

“ Obvious, my dear Blasé; or, as a late premier used to say, ‘ It can't be m'sscd’—‘ Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia:’ and, besides, your wet ghost is a mere crib from yourself; for whenever you go hunting in cloudy weather, don't you regularly ride with a smart silver parasol over your dear little head?”

“ Upon my word, baronet, you vote yourself a man of great *calibre*.”

“ And upon my word, Blasé, I can pay you the same compliment; for I vote you a great *bore*.”

“ That comes well from one who is as much cut by his brother M. P.s as a London *ex-manager* is by his actors.—Yes! and I could retort on you more severely —only just now I choose to think more than I say.”

“ Bravo! that's something new; for you generally *say* more than you *think*.”

Here a part of the company, as if spontaneously impelled by the same feeling, struck up a noisy chorus, and which completely drowned the voices of these two *chatterboxes*—but only for a short time, for on the chorus ceasing they began again, when the whole party left the room, and there we will also leave them; merely adding, that the conversational contest recommenced with each gladiator throwing out *vain boasting*.

insituations relative to Lady Recfley (late Miss Almack). One said she was such a cold, apathetic fool, that though he had squeezed her hand and trod on her toe, he had made no impression; whilst the other (Bronzely) replied, that he had done the same, and made such a strong impression, that she had actually never since yawned in his company. This fired Sir Juniper, and he betted a cool two hundred, that in a few days after her arrival in Paris (where she was hourly expected) he would, as usual, *outpinch* the poor braggart Bronzely.

This extraordinary wager having been laid and taken, Bronzely coolly recurred to the umbrella *interest* in the Shakspearian wet procession, upon which Sir Juniper irritably cried "*Patch*," and abruptly left the room.



CHAPTER XIII.

Arrivals and departures—A brave sailor frightened out of his birth—A letter from Captain Morden, and its consequences—Jura mountains and an old chateau—“A bold stroke for a wife”—A terrific tempest without and within—Superstition and stage-effect in a chapel—Our hero seen in a new light—Romantic incident and abrupt flight.

THE idea of for ever leaving Lady Morden, notwithstanding its painful associations, every hour taking deeper root in Vivid's breast, he told Sam Allact to prepare for their leaving Paris in two days; and when the obsequious *laquais* inquired for what part of the continent, his master replied, “For Italy”—“Very well!” rejoined Sam; “I shall be foremost in the field;” and he kept his word, not forgetting, as usual, among other travelling apparatus, his red flame and stage properties. Having taken leave of the Countess of Montpelier and her daughter, the only two persons in Paris whom Vivid regretted quitting (with the exception of her whom he was doomed to see no more), at the time appointed, master and man departed in the diligence for Dijon.

On the following morning Lord Carisbrook continued his joufney towards Malta, and (as if our hero and heroine were to be for ever involved in hopeless rencontres) took the Dijon road to Italy—a resolution to whieh he was strongly urged by the count, and avowedly because the grand château of his uncle, the Marquis of Calatra (whom he hoped his noble patron and daughter would visit), was situated in their route—namely, in the department of Jura.

Arriving at Fontainbleau, they ordered dinner to be prepared at the hotel, and in the mean time they strolled about the palace and gardens; when, after mounting into the queen's gallery and the gallery of stags, Lord Carisbrook's old antagonist gave him such sharp hints, that he resolved to return, but at the same time insisted on not breaking up the party, and peremptorily refused to allow any body to accompany him.

On returning to the hotel, he was about to open the door of his apartment and seek repose on the sofa, when the landlord advanced and said he was very sorry, but as a strange young Englishman had just been shown in by the waiter's mistake, and had coolly taken possession both of his lordship's room and the sofa, he (the host) hoped, since the said young "*milord Anglois*" would not turn out, that the noble *seigneur* would consent to accommodate matters by making use of another apartment.

"D—n his impudence and yours too!" quoth the indignant peer. "What! do you suppose that a veteran sailor is to be ousted of his birth by such fresh-water lubbers as you and this Mr. Free-and-easy? No, no! so here goes." (Trying to open the door.) "Why, zounds! 'tis locked!"

"To be sure it is, monsieur, inside; and, as he told the waiter, purposely to prevent being disturbed whilst he refreshed himself with a nap."

"No doubt! and whilst you and your brihed crew sung 'hushaby' to the brute's 'lullaby'—but spite of gout and your French fastenings, see if I don't give him such a broadside—yeo!—yeo!" (trying to force the door) "—there! and there!—crush! smash!"

Here, bursting it open, he hurried into the room; when, having gazed for a moment on the intruder's face, he stared, paused, and hurried out again, saying to the landlord,

"Never mind—show me to another room."

And who can wonder at this abrupt and unexpected retreat, when they are told that the awakened and alarmed "*mi lor Anglois*" proved to be no other than the only person that the old peer was literally afraid of—namely, Sir Pet Pamper.

On the return of the party from the palace, they expressed some surprise at finding his lordship in another room; but when the cause of this change was explained, most of them so far copied his example as

to resolve on leaving the hotel immediately. Lady Henrietta, however, was more considerate; for hearing this young gentleman was on his way to Paris, and having some hope that, from compunctionous motives, he was going there in search of his mother, she thought it would be rendering an act of kindness towards that unhappy lady if her address were communicated to him.

This point being agreed upon, Count Montnoir waited upon Sir Pet; and having civilly put the question, and given, as a reason, that he had lately seen Lady Painper at Paris, the "darling" confessed he was in search of her, and requested her address, which the count not only gave, but asked him whether he wished to see and converse with Lord Carisbrook and his daughter on the subject.

"What! see more of that old gouty sea-calf, who not ten minutes ago so shocked and exhausted me, that—do—just ring the bell."

"Ring de bell!—*ma foi! moi-même!*—I to descend to ——"

"Oh! you need not trouble yourself, for here comes the very man.—Waiter!"

"*Oui, monsieur.*"

"Instantly order post-horses for Paris."

"*Oui, monsieur.*" [Exit waiter.

"And now, *mon cher ami* Blackball, you may tell old Tarpawling and his chick, that whenever I bring to

my recollection the days I passed in their horrid den I almost expire; and therefore, should my mother and myself be reconciled, which probably we shall be, if I continue in the same mind, why then they shall be asked to Pamper Place, solely for the purpose of my giving them an equally facetious reception."

"*Diable!*—if you make up your mind! *Eh bien—* den I see you be not de fils pénitent."

"What I am, and why I seek my mother, is certainly not your affair. Suppose I feel my health makes it necessary I should always have somebody near me to complain to and find fault with—that is, I mean some kind complying person."

"*Oui*, me comprehend now:—ven you lay de *fauté* on maman, elle caresse—compose; *mais quand vous reprochez les autres, ils se fachent*—they vat you call 'kick;' and 'kick,' no good for *la santé*."

"Very likely; and if my *santé* did not prevent me, I would ascertain the fact at this moment; but you well know the slightest opposition brings on one of my bilious attacks, and therefore you take this mean advantage."

Here the waiter announced that the cabriolet was ready.

"Very well; and I am ready, and so *bon jour*, Monsieur Blackball."

"*Eh bien;* à votre *santé*, Monsieur Minikin."

On the count's return to his party, having stated

what had passed, they all agreed in hoping that the wronged mother would "stand to her arms," and live for ever apart from one, who, according to Lord Bacon, "to roast a little egg of his own, would burn a whole city."

Next morning Lord Carisbrook was informed that a courier had arrived before daybreak, express from Paris, with a letter which had been addressed to his lordship at Meurice's; and the words "To be forwarded" being written outside, the attentive *aubergiste* thought it his duty to despatch a messenger immediately after his lordship. But the letter did not prove quite so important as was imagined; for although written by Captain Morden, and therefore creating great curiosity and anxiety, it only contained one new piece of intelligence, namely, that, from over excitement and fatigue, he had been slightly indisposed for two or three days, but, by having kept himself quiet, he was now completely recovered, and as actively employed in attending to the ship's repairs as ever. The rest of the contents amounted to a mere recapitulation of his former wishes; and knowing that Lady Morden and her father were now on their way to Malta, he concluded with wishing them a prosperous journey.

The impression made by this communication, though not great, was still sufficiently strong to urge Lord Carisbrook to hasten towards the place of their destination; but Captain Morden's letter operated far

more deeply on Count Montnoir's designing mind, for he instantly caught at the word " indisposition ;" and the idea occurred to him (" his wish being father to such thought"), that the captain only concealed the really bad state of his health to prevent any alarm, but that in fact he was seriously ill.

" *Eh bien !*" communed this calculating Frenchman with himself: " *s'il meurt*, Lady Morden will become de young widow ; *et alors* Monsieur Vivid, he vil push for de marriage and de *argent* : *mais je ferai mon petit possible aussi* ; and having *l'opportunité*, me tink me have rather *l'avantage*.—*Oui—bon !*"

Now although this anticipating foreign fortune-hunter had no ground whatever for cherishing his selfish hopes (since the captain's account of his restored state of health was perfectly correct), yet the *humane* thought having once entered his obstinate head, it was not easily to be eradicated ; and he persisted in saying, as the husband was dying, he must consequently take care to be beforeband with the " English *désespéré* in seeing, by some stratagem or another, the proud, scornful Lady Morden ; and *succes ou failure*," he exclaimed, " me shall still enjoy de *vengeance*."

What was to be the nature of this meditated revenge, and when it was to be carried into execution, remained quite unsettled even in the count's mind. " 'Twas there but yet confused." However, as will

be seen, during their journey he had time to mature his plots and bring them into action.

Travelling with more speed than usual, they arrived at Dijon on the third day, and without encountering any adventure, although (unknown to them) they had nearly met with one of no small interest—namely, a *rencontre* with Vivid, who, with Alltaet, only left Dijon, and proceeded towards Switzerland an hour before the former party arrived. On the fourth morning his lordship also proceeded in the same direction, and arrived at Dole in the evening, where the count met with what he called a pleasant adventure. Seeing an old acquaintance stop in a cabriolet to change horses, he went to shake hands with him; and, on asking the usual common-place questions, viz. whence he had come, and whither he was going, his friend replied,

“Don’t you remember, when we last met, I avowed my intention of visiting several of the islands in the Mediterranean?”

On the count’s admitting that he recollectcd the circumstance, the traveller added, that, having visited them, he was now on his return from Malta, and on the road to Paris.

“Malta!—oh, oh!” quoth the count; “*bon—dat* is good: *mais—* perhaps you vil tell vat is better?—*Connaissiez-vous le Capitaine Morden?*”

"*Oui, le capitaine de la frégate le Protecteur.*"

"*Le même,*" continued the count: "*eh bien! — est-il malade?*"

"*Oui, de la fatigue — mais il n'est pas très malade.*"

"*A la lonne heure — he is ill; oui, and vil die.*"

"*Et vous aussi, mon ami: mai quand? — he! he!*"

The horses being put to, the two friends parted; when the count (having further made up his mind that the awful event he must wished for would speedily take place) resolved to lose not an instant in putting his intended plot into execution; and certainly never did time, place, and circumstance more combine to favour a villain's w'shes. Being now only a few leagues from the Marquis de Calatra's chateau, Lord Carisbrook was reminded of his promised visit there; and with his usual credulity falling into the snare, he assented to the count's proposal. This point being carried, the so far triumphant contriver secretly and confidently commenced further operations.

Leaving Dole, they travelled towards the Jura mountains; and having arrived at the foot of them, they began the tedious and somewhat formidable ascent. When midway they beheld to the right, about half a mile from the beaten track, a large chateau, which proved to be the one they were going to; but, to their surprise, though it bore evident marks of former grandeur, it appeared to be now more a splendid ruin than a habitable mansion. It was true that the centre of

the venerable building had lately undergone a fair repair, but the two wings remained in a most dilapidated state. Still the count, requesting them not to judge by outward appearances, and Lord Carisbrook having gone too far to retract, ordered the postillions to drive into the court-yard. On alighting and entering the hall they were yet more surprised; for the tottering old porter informed the count that his uncle was not at home, and added that his return was very uncertain, since he had left the day before for Geneva. This (as the reader will anticipate) proved no news to the count: he knew the marquis would be absent, and knew that such absence would make the assurance of success "doubly sure."

Lady Henrietta, however, naturally feeling suspicious and alarmed, entreated her father immediately to depart, but in vain: he came, he said, simply to visit the uncle for the sake of the nephew; and therefore, whilst the latter remained, he must necessarily be totally indifferent as to the absence of the former: besides, he asked, who would continue a journey over these wild, desolate mountains at that late hour? Lady Henrietta was consequently again compelled silently to submit to her fate. At length a bell announcing that dinner was ready, they all entered what was called the *grand salon*, a spacious apartment, but furnished scantily and in a very old-fashioned style. The marquis (unlike his nephew) being a rigid Roman Catholic, that part

of the chateau which he had expended most money upon was his chapel, where, in addition to a finely toned organ, was to be seen much rich tapestry, stained glass windows, tessellated pavement, and a handsomely decorated marble altar. But this expense was to be made up for elsewhere; to pay for *Paul, Peter* was to be robbed; and the rest of the building, by its shabby furniture and dilapidated walls, showed that it felt the effects of this religious display.

At dinner the party preserved a sort of awful silence; only Lord Carisbrook and Mrs. Alnack spoke at all; for the count, like Lady Henrietta, was entirely struck dumb, but by no means from the same cause. His silence was not occasioned by dread, but by joy—joy at the thought of the next day's triumph; and which anticipated triumph our poor heroine saw, or fancied she saw, in the satisfactory glare of his eye. Panting, therefore, for even a few minutes' escape from the object she more than ever detested, not long after dinner she retired to her chamber, and Lord Carisbrook and Mrs. Alnack soon copied her example.

Not so the dark, designing Frenchman; for he sat up waiting for the notary and other confederates, whom he had privately arranged with at Dole, and whom he expected to follow him to the chateau, and arrive at the hour when all but himself would have retired to rest—*i.e.*, midnight. Punctually at the ap-

pointed time they came, and were secretly admitted by their *capitaine*. Though not exactly *brigands*, yet their character was so far similar, that each of them would undertake any desperate measure which might "mend his life or get rid on 't." Besides, the count (to whom they were long known) had removed certain conscientious superstitious feelings, by convincing them that it was more meritorious than criminal to aid in redressing accumulated wrongs.

Here he began to divulge his exact plan, when, owing to the sudden rising of one of those tempests which so frequently visit these mountains, and which almost shook the venerable pile to its foundation, he was interrupted ere he had uttered ten words. To proceed was in vain; for the flashing of the lightning, the roaring of the thunder, and the howling of the wind, completely drew off the attention of his superstitious auditors. However, calling to his aid a couple of bottles of *l'eau de vie*, these six *half-brigands half-bigots* soon rallied, and one and all declared they were "eager for the fray."

The notary having prepared the necessary document, it was resolved that the chapel should be the scene of action; and, if Lady Henrietta had not gone to bed—a circumstance which, in consequence of the increasing fury of the storm, had most probably not occurred—she should be either lured or forced from her chamber

immediately. However, neither attempt proved to be necessary, for, on two of the party ascending the stairs, they met her rushing out of her room (still dressed as when she left the dinner-table) in a state of the utmost consternation. So completely had this terrific tempest agitated her, that, without noticing the rough and wild appearance of the persons she encountered, she entreated them to conduct her to a place of safety. This request of course they artfully complied with; and she soon found herself in what, compared to the room she had quitted, she considered to be a sanctuary—the chapel.

Thus fortune again favoured villainy; and the triumphant villain no sooner heard that the “scornful beauty” was alone and in his power than he entered the chapel; but thinking it politic at first to try persuasive means, he was accompanied only by the notary. Respectfully approaching her, the arch dissembler requested her not to be alarmed; but she could not resist uttering a faint shriek, and indignantly insisted on his instantly retiring. This new provocation calling forth all his revengeful feelings, he boldly avowed his purpose, and told her, that as Captain Morden could not long survive, and he was determined to be beforehand with his low English rival, she must immediately sign the legal document. Then ordering his ally to proceed to business, the notary read as follows:—

"I, Lady Henrietta Morden, in the event of the death of my husband Captain Morden, do bind myself, within twelve months from the day of his decease, to marry Count Montnoir, a French protestant; and if, in breach of this promise, I select any other husband, I further bind myself to forfeit to said Count Montnoir all the fortune now settled or hereafter to be settled upon me by my father, Lord Carisbrook.

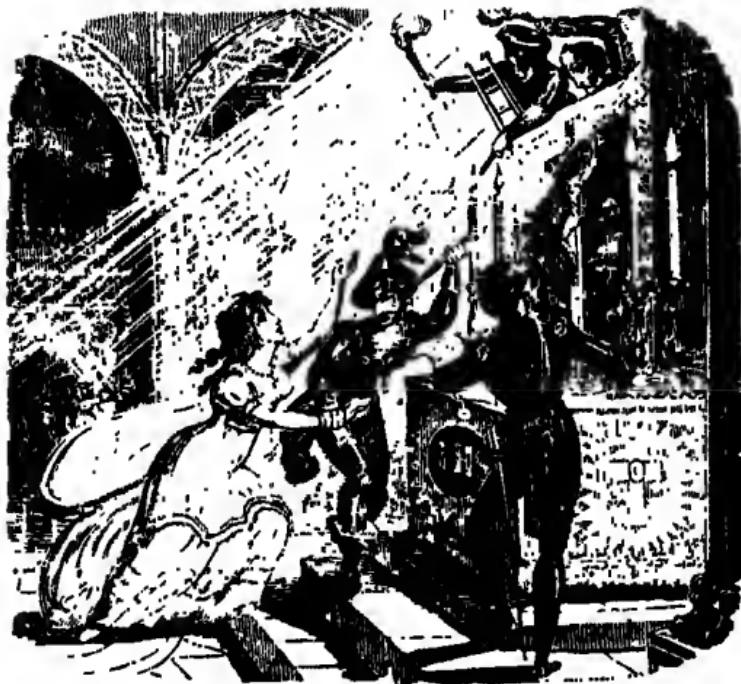
"Dated this —— day of ——"

Though almost breathless with horror and disgust, she still summoned nerve enough to avow that she treated the report of the captain's ill health and the document with the disdain they equally deserved; and at the same time threatened, if they did not instantly withdraw, to alarm her father and the rest of the inmates. This "empty menace," as they called it, only producing satisfactory smiles, she cried aloud for help; when, fearing she should call in vain, she flew to the organ, and, by forcibly striking the keys, three or four loud peals re-echoed through the chateau; on which her ferocious antagonist, in his turn, becoming more and more desperate, blew a whistle, and the eight armed russians rushing in and surrounding her, she screamed, and fell senseless to the ground: but by their aid (for her inanimate state did not at all suit their purpose) soon recovering, she wept, and on her

knees appealed to them for pity. Such appeal was only answered by renewed attempts to compel her to sign the awful contract; and one confederate pointing a dagger at her breast, and another (the notary) trying to force the paper into her hands, she began to fear she had no alternative but either to meet death or comply with their brutal design; when, just at this critical moment, just when the enraptured future husband felt secure of victory, the great painted window was not only shivered in pieces, and the report of firearms heard, but the whole chapel was enveloped in such an apparently supernatural glare of light, that the superstitious, dastardly crew, having no doubt they had roused Satan and his host, made a most precipitate retreat, leaving their valiant leader to shift entirely for himself.

At first believing he was wounded, he staggered against the altar; but soon discovering that he had falsely alarmed his *dear* self, and knowing that fortune would never favour him with such another opportunity, he so far struggled against his fears as to attempt singly to seize his victim; but new obstacles presented themselves, for he beheld two muffled-up, armed persons, by means of a ladder placed through a large orifice in the fractured window, rapidly descending into the chapel, and consequently the *re*-defeated Machiavel had no alternative but instantly to follow the ex-

ample of his dastardly confederates, still, however, indulging in the hope that he should soon rally them.



Here he was again disappointed; for no persuasion could induce either of the three who remained (the other five having left the chateau) to renew what *now* their superstitious terror made them call "most foul and sacrilegious acts." He therefore, as a last but poor resourcee, returned to the chapel door and listened.

One of the strangers who had thus entered (having

told the other to look out and watch), approaching Lady Henrietta, tried to raise and to revive her, but in vain. Supposing she was still in the hands of her unrelenting enemy, she shrank back with increased terror and disgust; when, as if inspired by a sudden impulse, a wild determination to attempt escaping, she rose, and hastily endeavoured to pass. Still she was detained, but not any longer by an antagonist—but—by a friend: not by Count Montnoir, but by Henry Vivid, who, saying that he feared he had added to her alarm, implored her to let the circumstances plead his excuse. For a while she could not credit what she either heard or saw; but at length perceiving the ruffian crew had all vanished, and finding herself alone with him in whose honour she might and did place the most implicit confidence, she became so overcome with mingled sensations of joy and surprise, that but for the relief obtained by a copious flood of tears, the still suffering Henrietta would again have sunk to the ground. As it was, he was compelled to support her; and with her head reclining on his shoulder, and again weeping, she murmured thanks for her deliverance. Here the arch fiend (now aware that the stranger was his hated rival), returned, accompanied by Lord Carisbrook and other inhabitants of the chateau, who had all at length been roused by the report of the pistols. “*Voilà!*” exclaimed the triumphant villain, pointing out the present situation of the parties; which

the astounded and indignant futher perceiving, he rushed forward, and advanced furiously towards the supposed destroyer of his daughter's honour, when, throwing herself between them, she exclaimed,

"Heavens! forbear, my father! he—he is my deliverer; ay, on my soul he saved me from the machinations of that wretch, who, with his russsian horde—"

Here the count haughtily interrupted her, and asked Lord Carisbrook if such gross palpable falsehoods required any contradiction.

"None, count," he replied; "no more will I believe her: but for her paramour—this spoiler—robber—"

"Hold, I implore you, sir! Oh! if my sainted mother were alive, would she place confidence in a poor treacherous villain's word, or in that daughter whom you once so loved? • How! turn away! still cast me off! Then, by my hopes of happiness hereafter, here, in the face of Heaven and of man, I swear he menaced me with instant death unless I signed a contract which a notary brought, und which vile document, upon my husband's death, bound me to forfeit all a bounteous parent's gifts, or wed the man whom from my heart I sicken at and scorn."

"How! the count?"

"Ay, as I have life, my father!"

"Where is this notary, then? Produce him to confirm what you so saeredly aver, and—" (Henrietta sighs and is silent)—"So, he is not to be found!"

"No; and if he were, leagued as he is with his abhorred employer, would he divulge the truth? Well! I submit—yes—to any punishment, so *he* who saw and saved me from their desperate plots—so *he* be spared."

"*He* says! Call you this evidence?"

"No; but call you *this* evidence?" cried Sam Alltaft, who at that moment rushed from behind the altar, dragging after him a little trembling Frenchman.



"Come into court, Mr. Notary," continued Sam, "and tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but

the truth, or I'll so prick your conscience with a second poke—look!" (flourishing stage-dagger.)

"How!" cried Lord Carishbrook, "the notary!"

"Ay, my lord, and I'll tell you all about it. Prowling in the dark round the back part of the chapel, I was surprised to hear something moving inside one of the monuments. I listened, and distinctly heard three sharp sneezes. Mercy on me, thought I, do the dead catch cold? So lighting my Promethean, I looked closely about, and in the first place found the tomb had been opened for the purpose of repairing it; and in the second, in consequence of the panic produced by my master's pistols and *my* red flame, and *my* phosphoric materials, this chief agent of yon *chivalrous* count had concealed himself in the damp vault."

"Well," continued his lordship, "all this might happen, but I require more ample proof: where, where is the contract?"

"Here, my lord," resumed exulting Sam; "read, read—and if he dare deny what he before confessed, more pistols, daggers, and red flame shall send him to a vault from which there's no escape. Speak: was not this paper forced into the hands of that wronged noble lady hy armed ruffians? and would she not have yielded to their threats, but, well aware that fiends best combat fiends, I raised a *devil* in her cause.—Say, shall he come again?"

"*Non, non—c'est le papier—c'est vrai—je confesse.*"

Here triumphant Sam strutted about exclaiming—“What profession like that of a callboy?” whilst Lord Carisbrook, overcome with shame and compunction, clasped his loved daughter in his arms, and in his turn, bursting into tears, implored forgiveness for his weak, unfeeling conduct.

“Forgiveness!” she replied; “oh! in this fond embrace I am amply recompensed for all my sufferings. Your own, my father—still, still affectionate as ever.”

After again pressing her to his heart, he next approached Vivid, and, confessing he had been wholly deceived, hoped the preserver of his daughter (for such he boasted he should ever call him) would, sailor-like, now that all storms were past, and they were landed on a peaceful shore, at least shake hands on parting.

Vivid, well aware that amidst all his lordship’s errors he still bore a rooted attachment for his daughter, instantly complied; and the old peer, naturally anxious to be informed by what good fortune her champion had appeared at this most critical juncture, begged he would narrate the strange romantic tale, and (to avoid interruption) not before his vile defamer, but in private. “Come,” he cried, placing himself between his daughter and him whom he now called their mutual friend, and taking each of their arms (for agitation and exertion are not the gout’s best roadjutors) he was about to leave the chapel, when,

bowing, cringing, and with a truly jesuitical address, the baffled coah't entreated, for the sake of justice and of truth, he should be present at the explanation ; but his lordship, without taking the slightest notice of this appeal, ordered his servant to hasten to the next post-house and procure horses, and then abruptly retired, leaving the enemy to enjoy those *satisfactory* sensations which knaves usually feel when they find themselves the dupes of their own art.

Vivid commenced his narration with stating (as our reader has been previously informed) that he and his faithful *laquais* were travelling towards Switzerland, when the night before, about ten o'clock, on the diligence accidentally breaking down, nearly half-way up the Jura mountains, they agreed, whilst it was repairing, to walk on ; but being suddenly overtaken by that tremendous storm which he supposed his lordship must have in some degree felt the appalling effects of, they knew not where to fly for shelter or for safety. In addition to the thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain, the darkness of the night precluded search, for they could not see ten paces before them ; when fortunately, owing to a flash which spread momentary light around, they beheld at a short distance the turrets of an old chateau. Thither they hastened ; but from its dilapidated appearance believing it to be uninhabited, they were about to leave it in despair ; when the tempest increasing, and perceiving that although there were no

windows or doors in one of the wings, yet as an accessible old apartment on the ground floor presented itself, they entered it; and notwithstanding it contained only tattered tapestry and a worn-out broken-down sofa, so "sweet" to them "proved the uses of adversity," that they hailed this shovell as a luxurious resting-place. Sam, having torn down several pieces of tapestry, made his bed on the ground.

"Whilst I," continued Vivid, "reclined on the sofa, and should probably have slept soundly till the morning, but about midnight I was awakened by a noise in the interior of the chateau, and, to my astonishment, soon afterwards I heard distantly three loud peals of an organ, and which sounds being speedily followed by violent screaming, we felt no time was to be lost, and consequently left our chamber, when, hurrying round the building, we beheld an illuminated chapel window, and heard numerous voices within*. What was to be done? If we attempted force, numbers would have instantly overpowered us—stratagem, therefore, was our only hope; and providentially beholding a ladder (left there by workmen who had been repairing a monument) we instantly mounted it and commenced hostilities. In what manner we conducted them, and

* It may not be supererogatory to add, that Lord Carisbrook's and his daughter's apartments lay at a greater distance from the chapel than Vivid's.

mahaged our inferior force, your lordship has already heard ; but for the bright result, the glorious triumph of the best of daughters over her fiend-like foe, thank never-erring Heaven and not us. Such is my tale ; which, though in parts it may appear wild and romantic, still carries with it truth."

" Ay, my lord," rejoined Sam, " the whole truth, as I hope to be manager."

" No donht," replied his lordship ; " but we will thank you, and my son Captain Morden shall thank you—ay, like ourselves—with his whole heart."

At this moiment the carriages being announced, the delighted father requested his new friend to accompany them as far as Geneva ; adding, that in case of renewed hostilities, surely his daughter's preserver should be near to aid her. But Vivid at first, though grateful for the request, modestly declined it : however, on its being repeated he consented, since he felt convinced that as she travelled under her father's auspices, if still the shafts of calumny should fly, they must fall pointless to the ground ; yet he secretly resolved to go no further than Geneva. As to Mrs. Almack, always siding with the successful party, the moment her noble cousin took Vivid by the hand, he, in her opinion, became the *exclusive*, and the count the *excluded*. Indeed, so broad was her *rat-like* style of running from the falling house, that, " insisting on removing her

poor dear Henrietta from these contaminating walls," she hurried her to the carriage, where Lord Carisbrook and our hero instantly following, they all took their departure.

So far from meditating a renewal of hostilities, the count having next day heard from one of his confederates that the neighbouring police were on the alert, instead of thinking of pursuit, naturally thought only of flight, and by taking a cross road towards the frontiers hoped to escape into Italy; but he vainly hoped, for he was captured, tried, found guilty, and sent to the galleys for seven years.



CHAPTER XIV.

The gout in high force again—A dun, and the inconvenience of unpacking—The *love-wager* of two hundred pounds decided—*Sang-froid* and free and-easy—Our hero like an April day—Different and indifferent roads—Snow-storm and the Great St. Bernard—The whirligigs of fortune, and wind-up of Paddy Pillgarlic.

ON their arrival within a mile of Geneva, they took up their abode at the Hotel d'Angleterre, which is built on the very shore of the lake; and they were all so delighted with the house and its situation, that they determined upon remaining there a couple of days; during which period Vivid and Lady Henrietta, accompanied by her father and Mrs. Almack, took various pleasurable excursions; sometimes visiting Geneva, sometimes various ancient chateaux—amongst others, Voltaire's residence at Ferney—and frequently sailing on the lake. Vivid, however, honourably persisting in his resolution, determined, even now in the meridian of his joys, immediately to put an end to them; and, for this purpose, very early on the third morning he prepared to depart, intending to leave behind an explanatory letter to Lord Carishrook, giving

such lair and disinterested reasons for his apparently strange conduct as he supposed would induce both father and daughter at least not to blame him; and which letter he was about to desire the valet to deliver to his master, when he was informed that during the night his lordship had been attacked with one of those violent fits of the gout which generally confined him to his chamber for a fortnight.

Under these circumstances it became necessary to pause, particularly as the valet assured him it was impossible his master could at present read any letter. Besides, it occurred to Vivid, that his lordship might not choose that Lady Morden and Mrs. Almack should be thus, as it were, left alone and unprotected. Acting therefore on this just conception, he resolved at least to delay his departure till the invalid became capable of expressing his wishes on the subject.

During this interval, our hero deemed it proper to live in a great degree apart from Lady Henrietta and her companion, merely now and then walking with them on the banks of the lake, and occasionally breakfasting and drinking tea with them. Consequently he regularly dined at the *table d'hôte*, where one day he was familiarly addressed by an Englishman of whom at first he had no recollection; but being reminded of the conversational sparring-bout between Sir Juniper Jackanape and another person, that person was instantly recognised as Blasé Bronzely, who, in his

usual *independent* style, on the waiter hinting to him (for the third time) that the driver of the cabriolet from Lyons was still waiting to be paid, coolly requested his fellow-countryman to settle with "the impudent varlet," merely giving as a reason, that, his money being locked up in his trunk, it would save him the trouble of unpacking. Vivid stared and hesitated; but on the driving dun appearing in *propria personâ*, and in a furious rage calling his debtor "*Monsieur Goddam Rosbif*," stamping, and smacking his whip, the loan (principally for the sake of national honour) was forthwith complied with, when the only return the good-natured lender received was a patronizing request to *hob* and *nob*, and an assurance that he (facetious Blase) considered himself under so great an obligation that he should remain *indebted to him for ever*. These last words were accompanied with such significant looks as to admit of only one construction. Then suddenly turning the conversation, "the maiden modesty of Grimbald" was again brought into action —first by his publicly mentioning his two hundred pounds' bet with Sir Juniper relative to the *luckadaisycal* Lady Reefley, and next by his boasting that if a woman's circulation stood below the freezing-point, he could instantly raise it to summer heat.

"Whilst," he added, "poor little Juniper—who, by the by, is nicknamed 'Icicle'—ha! ha!—why he has no more chance of winning the wager than he has of

•being (what he aspires to be) chancellor of the exchequer. Yet, I say—suppose after all he doesn't pay."

"True," replied Vivid; "and" (with a significant look) "suppose he should remain indebted to you for ever!"

"Oh! you sly wag! that's not fair: remember, debts of honour ought always to be paid."

"And so ought honourable debts—not that I allude to my trifling one."

"Oh no!" rejoined Bronzely; "of course far otherwise: and to prove you are wholly above such an allusion, and still to prevent my unpacking, probably as you see the waiter is collecting the reckoning, why another little odd coin or two——"

Vivid stared and hesitated, but at length could not help again complying.

"Bravo!" continued Blase: "though I seldom descend to accept favours, yet when they are offered in such a truly gentlemanlike manner—thank you!" (Taking the money.) "Waiter!—another bottle of *Lafitte!*"

The jovial glass went round; and, according to the old system of "*in vino veritas,*" Bronzely at length confessed he had been so completely cleaned out at the London and Paris gaming-tables, that he could no longer carry on the war without Sir Juniper's hundreds. However, of those he was secure; for though Lady

Reefley might be warmed by *Le Soleil* (meaning himself), what chance had the “Icicle?”

The bottle being finished, they were both on the point of departing, when a tremendous uproar suddenly breaking out in the room above, they paused; and, on the noise increasing, Vivid, fearing if Lady Morden were not in danger, still she might be at least in a state of great alarm, determined to fly to her assistance, when he was arrested in his progress by the entrance of a waiter, who assured him that her ladyship and friend were in perfect safety.

“What is the matter then?” quoth Bronzely. “What is the cause of this infernal disturbance?”

“I am not exactly aware,” replied this familiar varlet; “but this I know, they have just now turned me out of the room.”

“And who are *they*?”

“Why you shall hear, sir. Early this evening a lady and gentleman arrived in a cabriolet and four, and were immediately shown into the room overhead, when, lo! about half an hour ago, an English post-chaise and four rattled into the inn-yard, and *un mignon Anglois*, in a state of great hurry and agitation, jumped out, and anxiously inquired for two persons exactly answering the description of the cabriolet travellers. Well, sir, on my pointing out their apartment, he rushed up stairs, burst open the door, and discovered,

just sitting down to their dinner, his runaway wife and her dear cicisbeo."

"Whose?" inquired Bronzely, "whose wife?"

"That I can't tell, sir; for during the short time I was indulged with the *honour* of their company, so great was the noise and confusion that it was impossible to make out either of the names."

"And yet, Mr. Wiseacre, you made out that the lady was a runaway wife!"

"Nay," said Vivid, "perhaps he heard enough to—"

"I did, sir, and saw enough; for I beheld this *enragé milor Anglois* thrust his fist into the cicisbeo's face, and then heard him swear, 'by the honour of an injured husband,' he'd have his life—his parliamentary life."

"His *parliamentary* life!"

"Ay, those were the very words."

"Oh ho!" rejoined Vivid. "I say, *mon ami*, suppose this M. P. should prove to be the 'Icicle,' and the fair runaway Lady Reefley."

"And suppose, *mon ami*, the husband should prove to be no less a person than Sir Henry Reefley—ha! ha! ha!—'very like a whale!'"

"And the husband *is* Sir Henry Reefley!" exclaimed Sam Alltaet, who at that moment made his appearance; "ay, Sir Henry Reefley, as sure as the

lady is his lady, and the favoured Lothario, Sir Juniper Jackanape."

"How!" cried Bronzely: "who told you all this stupid coek-and-bull, Mr. Busybody?"

"Why, Sir Juniper's own valet; who added, that his master had unfortunately been urged on to this expensive piece of stage-effeet by some cursed fool having bette~~ed~~ him two hundred he had no chance."

"Ahem!" quoth Vivid. "I wonder, Mr. Bronzely, what the poor loser will say for himself."

"Say!—why, 'Master Shallow, that he owes you sixty franes.' Plague on the *yea-nay* oaf and her execrable taste. But I'll know more; I'll have the strongest proof the bet was fairly won."

"Right; and perhaps my trusty *laquais* here can give it. Come, Sam, if you know more——"

"Why, sir, as far as I can learn, the parties being old acquaintances, they all three travelled together from Paris to Lyons; where Sir Henry, renewing a former attachment with a celebrated opera-daneer, left Sir Juniper and his lady too much alone together; and she being a toothpick listless sort of person (something like Idle in the faree, who, to save himself trouble, will submit to any thing), and consequently not able to resist an active siege, impcreetibly yielded to her paramour's proposals, and, without scarcely knowing why or wherefore, this morning eloped with him;

when Sir Henry, who last night had supped and staid late at the opera-dancer's, returning home an hour after dawn, found, to his consternation and astonishment, the bird had flown, and immediately setting off in pursuit of her, arrived—”

“As we have heard, Sam, half an hour ago. But tell me, does Sir Juniper's valet know what has passed since this formidable rencontre took place?”

“Partly, sir, for he was waiting at the dinner-table at the time Sir Henry rushed into the room; and when with all the fury of a wronged husband he approached and accused his guilty wife, what do you think was this soft languid lady's extraordinary answer?”

“What, Sam?”

“Why, sir, in a drawling tone she said, ‘I am sure (imitating her) I am very sorry, Sir Henry; but pray take care, or you will actually tread on poor dear Bijoux's tail.’”

“Meaning her fat poodle, I suppose.”

“The same, sir, who, gorged to the muzzle, was lying near her feet. And then, sir, when become more indignant at this ineffably cool treatment, the injured husband returned to the charge; what was her next reply?—Why, ‘Dear me!—Lord! what harm have I done? My honour's safe—at least I think it is; and I am sure I am as ready to go home with you, Sir Henry, as to go on with this tiresome Sir Juniper;

for what do you think?—it's literally quite shocking—but he has slept and snored almost the whole way from Lyons."

" Oh ho!" rejoined Vivid; " merely a sleeping partner, I perceive. Very modest indeed!—But what more, Sam?"

" Why, sir, she added, in her usual *sang-froid* style, ' The man is only in love with himself—at least it is evident he is not in love with me; for by what he muttered in the carriage between sleeping and waking, instead of wanting to win my affections, the torpid animal wants to win some paltry wager.' "

" Bravo! here's eccentricity! here's a new mode of love-making!—If I forget or miss this, may my play be ——"

" Oh! now," exclaimed Bronzely, " I see it all—that he may boast he has outrivalled me, and pocket the stakes, he has carried off this dear *co-icicle* without caring any more for her than she cares for him. Curious—*très extraordinaire*. But does he imagine the matter shall terminate here? No, I'll instantly see Sir Henry; and if he agree with me that it is all a farce, why I shall vote my bet a bubble one."

Bronzely having been long on intimate terms with Sir Henry, on his requesting a short private conference, the latter immediately granted it; when it appearing more and more evident that Lady Reefley had

been as much *raced for* as a prize cup, and was *bona fide* guilty more of inadvertent than of dishonourable intentions, Sir Henry resolved to bury all in oblivion, and offered to take her home again. She consented to his proposal, but with her usual nonchalance, and which was still more conspicuously displayed on her being informed that her mother and Lady Henrietta were both in the hotel; when, strange to say, she actually declined seeing either of them, giving as an excuse that she had undergone quite fatigue and trouble enough for one day. Besides, though she and her mother were "unused to the melting mood," Lady Morden would no doubt get up such a scene!—"Oh!" she muttered, "her feelings are so intense that, poor dear girl, I must spare her. So come, Henry; come, sweet, darling Bijoux!"—and arm in arm away they trotted, like a true loving couple, and continued their journey to Italy.

As to the hero of the drama, Sir Juniper, he stole off to Geneva, from which place he sent to Bronzely the following laconic letter; a letter written in imitation, we suppose, of the well-known one which many years ago Quin the actor sent to Rich the manager.

"I am at Geneva.

"JUNIPER JACKANAPE."

To which he received an answer precisely similar to that of the manager.

"Stay there, and be hanged.

"BLASE BRONZELY."

This of course produced a decisive reply; and the winner of the bet informed the loser, that if the money were not instantly paid, he would trouble him to appoint time and place, for "tilt they must;" but Bronzely, knowing his man as well as himself, took no other notice of the letter than simply to light his cigar with it; and Sir Juniper saying he had satisfied himself, each speedily left Switzerland—the former (having previously and prudently borrowed a small sum of his friend Sir Henry) for Italy, the latter for England, in both which countries more, perhaps, may hereafter be related of these delightful *par nobiles*.

Lord Carisbrook's health being now so far restored as to render him capable of sitting in his arm-chair, Vivid thought it was time to carry his intentions into execution; and accordingly making up his mind positively to depart on the following day, he then retired to his apartment and wrote to his lordship the explanatory letter; he then ordered Alltact secretly to pack up, and to call him next morning at sunrise; afterwards, as evening was advancing, he took

the usual walk on the shores of the lake, accompanied by Mrs. Almack and Lady Henrietta. Feeling,—indeed being determined, that this meeting should positively be their last; his agitation became so overpowering, that though during the walk he in some measure contrived to conceal it, yet on their return to the hotel, having first taken leave of Mrs. Almack, he next conducted Lady Henrietta to the door of her apartment, when, on her cordially wishing him good night, he could not, when he attempted to repeat the same kind wish, refrain from shedding tears. In vain he endeavoured to suppress and hide them—in vain he struggled to tear himself away; till at length having summoned sufficient resolution to part from her for ever, he, for the first time (and for his excuse, as he supposed, the last time) wildly seized her hand and vehemently kissed it. Lady Morden, in her confusion, scarcely knew what had passed; and he rushed up stairs, entered his chamber, and threw himself on the bed, where he remained without closing his eyes till break of day: he then rose, and at the appointed time, when Alltact made his appearance, he found his master ready to start.

A cabriolet was ordered, and at six o'clock, having previously placed the letter to Lord Carisbrook in the landlord's hands, he and faithful Sam set off towards Italy; but knowing his lordship would travel the straight road, he (Vivid) took the circuitous one, still

persisting in his determination of for ever avoiding the person whom he most dreaded, but most loved.

The landlord punctually delivered the letter, and informed his lordship that the writer was by this time far off. This intelligence much surprised his lordship, but his astonishment became tenfold when he read the motives for this extraordinary and abrupt proceeding. Explaining the matter to his daughter and cousin, they were equally if not more amazed; and notwithstanding the letter carried with it to poor Lady Morden the melancholy consolation of accounting for his strange conduct on the preceding evening, yet she felt that her prospects were now so lamentably hopeless, that only her father's presence restrained her from "giving sorrow vent," and at once exclaiming,

"Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?"

All, however, could not help confessing that his motives were as rational as they were honourable; and Lord Carisbrook was so particularly pleased with the concluding line of the letter, that he read them a second time aloud.

"I boast not, my lord, of sufficient mental energy to resist those enchanting spells which were hourly, though innocently, thrown around me. What, then, was to be done? Was I, during a brave officer's ab-

sence in the service of his country, to be constantly seen or heard of in his wife's company; and thus to give calumny additional grounds for spreading its destructive shafts? In short, had I any other alternative than the one I have adopted? Alas! not one; and therefore, wishing you farewell for ever, and hoping you and your daughter may enjoy that happiness which I have for ever lost,

“I remain,
“Your lordship's obliged servant,
“HENRY VIVID.”

“He is right!” cried the old peer; “and I swear that the person who can thus act is fit to command a first-rate; ay, that he is, for he has twice conquered; first by defeating that treacherous count, and next by a greater victory—by conquering himself. Well! though I fear I shall never see the brave fellow again, yet I hope I shall hear that throughout life's voyage he has encountered only prosperous gales: and you—don't you hope so, Henrietta?”

“I do, indeed, my father.”

Having said or rather *sighed* these few words, she suddenly left the room, and here the conversation terminated, but was renewed at dinner-time, when the whole party, by Lord Carisbrook's desire, drank our hero's health.

In three days afterwards, his lordship being com-

pletely convalescent, they continued their journey towards Malta, taking the direct road through Savoy to Turin; whilst Vivid, in the route he had chosen (the Martigny one), found the scenery every mile as he advanced more and more wild and savage. His only track lay over high rocks and precipices, and nothing could be distinguished but one black, desolate line of mountains. After traversing for upwards of eight hours paths nearly trackless, encountering the merciless fury of a snow-storm, and owing to the darkness of the night and the obstinacy of their mules losing their way, Sam Alltact began to fear that the *dénouement* of his drama had arrived, when the guide pointed out in the distance, and at a height considerably above them, the twinkling of lights, and which lights, to their great joy, he informed them were burning within the walls of the celebrated convent of St. Bernard.

Soon arriving at the *hospicc* gate, they instantly dismounted and knocked for admittance, when a venerable monk came forth, and having welcomed and ushered them into a warm and comfortable apartment he departed, saying he would send refreshments, and see that their bedchambers were properly prepared.

Seated near a blazing wood fire, and enjoying the plain homely viands put before them, our wayworn travellers heeded not the howling of the wintry wind without, or the dreariness of the everlasting snow

around, but soon retired to rest. In the morning, looking out of his chamber window, Vivid beheld, as far as the eye could sweep, one white and frost-bound waste, through which one of the famed St. Bernard dogs was piloting a benighted female traveller and her child. Nothing could exceed the wildness and desolation of the scene—

“The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land ;
Loud shrieks the soaring hern ; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds ;
Then from the forest-rustling mountains comes a voice
That, solemn sounding, bids the world prepare.”

Though such was the savage scene without, yet all within proved calm and cheerful; and he was delighted to discover that he and Allect were not the only visitors. At the breakfast-table he met with at least a dozen weather-hound inmates, some of whom were of the gentler sex, and who, being prevented by the increased fury of the tempest from taking their departure, wisely resolved to make the most of the numerous comforts* around them, and bravely “bide the pelting of the pitiless storm.”

Amongst the party Vivid only recognised a single

* In the reading-room was a choice collection of books,—also portfolios of prints, and a large album; in another room a piano-forte, &c.

person, and he proved to be one of the stage-coach passengers on that memorable day when, owing to the ill-luck of Lieutenant Pillgarlic, they were all upset. Soon entering into conversation with his fellow-traveller, and reminding him of the circumstance, Vivid inquired whether he had ever had the bad fortune to cut in again with that most curious *capsizing* partner?

"O yes," was the reply: "living at the same hotel, I often afterwards met him; and I am sorry to inform you, that Lieutenant Pillgarlic, after having never been able to keep out of a pretty scrape, has at last got into the grand scrape of all—matrimony."

"Indeed! and pray," rejoined Vivid, "what facetious lady has got into the grand scrape with him?"

"Oh, facetious with a vengeance! for whilst by giving up 'single blessedness' she cleared herself out of twenty old scrapes, he consequently got into as many new ones."

"How! explain."

"Why, the arch Irish pretender, Miss Judith O'Shammerkin, notwithstanding the remonstrances of some of his friends (one of whom he actually called out in consequence of his '*scandalous* insinuations'), readily cajoled the blind Pillgarlie into believing that she not only possessed in Connaught a net five hundred pounds per annum, and that she did not owe a single shilling, but, having neither chick, child, nor poor relative to hang upon her, he vaunted as an ad-

ditional boast, that he was sure of a clear, quiet fireside."

"And I presume the reverse proved to be the case."

"Even so; for, on their arrival at her native town in Connaught (where they went to pass the honeymoon), poor Pill turned out to be another regular *Copper Captain*, for he was not only dunned by publicans, dressmakers, and others of Miss Judith's creditors, but he was supplicated by numbers of her low, needy, Patland relatives. In short, 'Fortune's fool' seemed doomed never to become 'Fortune's favourite.'"



CHAPTER XV.

Frost and thaw—A circuitous route—Lost and found, or “*re-diuos ignes*”—Our hero and heroine (even in the event of Captain Morden’s death) sundered for ever—Oxymel’s odd narrative—Westminster Hall, and lawyers fighting their own causes.

THE stormy and snowy weather continued till the fifth day, when the wind changed, and Vivid (having first dropped a requisite compliment in the *tronc des aumônes*) took his departure, much regretting that probably he for ever bade adieu to the kind and hospitable monks.

On the third night of his journey, he and Alltaet arrived at the top of the Simplon, where they found an excellent inn. In two days afterwards (in the afternoon) they reached Milar[“]; and in the evening Vivid went to *La Scala* (the Opera), where such evil persons as those who prefer “darkness rather than light” must always be highly gratified; since, excepting wax candles on the stage, in the orchestra, and in the royal box, the rest of the theatre remained in total obscurity. How different from our London Opera-house, where its

fashionable visitors go more to be *seen* than to *see*, and where the pit is never emptied during the performance; whilst at *La Scala*, the moment the *prima donna* has concluded her first song, almost all the *pittites* retire, and do not return till they hear the symphony strike up for her second song, and that over—*iterum excent*, and for no other purpose than to retire to a saloon and make speculating bargains, in a similar way to our jobbers in the Stock Exchange.

Vivid, not having any inducement for remaining longer at Milan, proceeded next morning towards Florence, where he arrived on the second day, still without having any where heard of Lord Carisbrook and his party. But this circumstance was not at all to be wondered at, since our tourist had not only taken the circuitous route to Italy, but, having remained some days at St. Bernard, he naturally supposed his lordship and the person he most adored, but still most dreaded, were a considerable distance before him. However, it soon appeared they were not so far in advance as he imagined.

The hotel in Florence at which he put up was unlike most grand Italian hotels, for it proved to be as comfortable as it was splendid. The chamber in which he slept was decidedly the best he had occupied since his arrival on the continent, though, being very fatigued and sleepy, he took little notice of the bed, looking-glasses, and other sumptuous furniture till he arose in

the morning, when, gazing around, he was much dazzled with all he beheld, but was so particularly struck with the brilliant appearance of the toilet-table, that he closely inspected it, when to his surprise he found, lying there amongst other articles of *bijouterie*, a very elegant worked gold purse, apparently containing several *napolcons*. Knowing it was not his property, he instantly rang the bell; and on a *fille-de-chambre* attending the summons, he asked her whether she knew to whom the purse belonged.

"No," she replied; "but I suspect it must have been accidentally left by the sweet English young lady who the night before last slept in this room."

"What English young lady?" inquired Vivid.

"Why, some of the servants called her Lady Henrietta, whilst others called her Lady——"

"Morden!"

"The same."

"And I—fool, fool! to know not, feel not, that but a few short hours ago the bed I slept in had contained the loveliest, most enchanting treasure."

"Ay! you may well say so, sir; and happy is the husband to whom she is now journeying."

"He is indeed!"

"And yet do you know, sir, I don't think the lady is quite happy."

"Why not?"

"I can't tell: but though in her father's company

she seemed rather cheerful; yet, when she was alone, she so sighed, and tears sometimes so started into her eyes, that——”

“Leave—leave me!—nay, I command you! Oh!” (turning aside) “this has raised a storm that, shaking my resolve, will wreck, destroy me.—Away!—nay, pray, prithee leave me.”

At this moment Sam Ailtact entered, and so far confirmed the intelligence given by the *fille-de-chambre* as to state, that Lady Henrietta and her father, after having stayed the night at the inn, had departed the morning before. Sam at the same time added, that the waiters had heard Lord Carisbrook’s servants say their master intended to pass two days at the next city—Sienna; and probably he might stay longer, as he there expected to receive letters from Malta and England. On hearing this communication, Vivid hastened to the landlord, and told him, that as he supposed he would be happy, if only for the credit of his hotel, to return lost property to its right owner, he (Vivid) had the gratification of placing in his hands Lady Henrietta’s valuable purse, and (having described how and where he found it) recommended him to forward it immediately to her at Sienna. The landlord heartily thanked him for his kind and prompt attention, and Vivid, having on every account urged despatch, wished him good morning.

Our active host ordered a courier to get ready immediately; and Sienna being only four posts from Florence, it was evident he would arrive there long before Lord Carishrook's departure. In a very few minutes the messenger left the hotel, the landlord having previously enclosed the purse in an envelope, and at the same time a note, in which he stated that he felt it his duty to inform Lady Morden that she had not to thank him for the recovery of her property, but a young Englishman of the name of Vivid—a statement which, if the latter had been in the least degree aware of, he would certainly have insisted on being wholly omitted.

Trifling as this little incident might under other circumstances have appeared, it now created in our hero's mind a most forcible and heart-rending impression; for he saw that Lady Henrietta's unhappiness had rather increased than diminished.—But what was to be done? She was still married—and to one who not only deserved her affections, but likewise the esteem of all who knew him. The die, therefore, was cast, and he (Vivid) was sundered from her for ever. For in case of Captain Morden's death (an event he had too much honour and delicacy even for one moment to look forward to) he knew Lord Carishrook would persist in his former singular resolution, and select another naval officer for his daughter's hus-

band. Indeed, during the captain's supposed illness, Lord Carishbrook had frequently declared that such was his positive determination. Besides, notwithstanding the late kind treatment which Vivid had received from his lordship, was it probable that, under any circumstances, he would condescend to give away Lady Henrietta to the son of a country medical practitioner? Never; and the only hope, therefore, that remained for our unfortunate hero was to endeavour, by persevering in *his* resolution, to bury in oblivion all recollection that “such things were, and were most dear to him.”

Acting under this truly honourable impulse, he avoided the Sienna road, and took the route to Pisa and Leghorn. In vain he attempted to amuse himself with his *memoranda dramatica*—in vain faithful Sam tried to cheer him by prattling on various topics. Amongst others, knowing his master's contempt for that poor substitute for wit and humour, *punning*, Sam boasted that he also so despised this modern mode of marring conversation—this easy, provoking *play-upon-word* system—that, in the hope of reforming it, he had sketched two rough caricatures—one displaying the *lachrymose*, forced titter that followed the *efforty* attempt of the punster, and the other the hearty laugh that accompanied a genuine stroke of humour.

“*Ecce signum!*” quoth Sam; “behold my speci-

mens! and thus headed—‘*Extorted* laughter at a bad pun,’ and ‘*Excited* laughter *with* a good joke.’”

a Joke! — *a Pun!!!*



Vivid faintly smiled, but said nothing, when Sam thus continued: “During my *strollership* I offered one of these quibbling *nnendurables* a whole week’s salary, viz. a sovereign, not to speak to me again—‘Make it two,’ quoth he, ‘and we’re for ever *two*.’ ‘Confound you!’ replied I: ‘there! and if I starve—’”

Here his master interrupted him, and requested to be left to his own thoughts. Sam having obeyed, the

idea that another accidental "encontre might take place (during the period Lady Morden continued in Italy) induced our hero to think of returning to England, where, by soliciting the muse's aid, he might so far be consoled as to be enabled to say with Waller,

"He caught at love, and fill'd his arms with bays."

Notwithstanding Sam's remonstrances (who sighed at the thought of leaving "lassie ground for cockney land"), Vivid, having made up his mind to return home immediately and by sea, soon after his arrival at Leghorn visited the quay for the purpose of ascertaining at what time a vessel was likely to sail for England, when, to his surprise and gratification, he found an old acquaintance there making the same inquiry—Henry Oxymel, the liberal, good-humoured journalist. After the usual salutations, each naturally (in the words of the song) asked "Why did you come?"—"Why do you go?" Vivid soon gratified his friend's curiosity; but Oxymel's story being much more complicated, they agreed to adjourn to the hotel for the sake of there talking the subject over.

During their long separation, it appeared that Oxymel had "turned o'er a catalogue" of pecuniary woes seldom equalled. In the first place, he had become bail for a jesuitical friend, who had at last shown himself in his true colours by leaving his benefactor to pay the whole sum, namely, two thousand five hundred pounds: secondly, two libels having slipped into his

newspaper (for certainly he wrote not a line of either of them), actions were brought; and the plaintiffs recovering in both causes, his expenses amounted to above fifteen hundred pounds: thirdly, his sister's husband, "a prosperous gentleman," becoming a bankrupt, his wife and four children were suddenly thrown on the brother's hands. These accumulated misfortunes, almost "enough to weigh a royal merchant down," soon involved poor Oxymel in debt; and though for many weeks he contrived to put off the evil day, it at length arrived. A writ was issued against him for fifty pounds; and knowing, if he were once captured, twenty or thirty detainers would be lodged against him, he thought it high time to prepare for escaping, and consequently requested his affectionate brother Christopher to come and assist him.

Christopher instantly complied; and here were two more *par nobiles*, for one was nearly as poor as the other. An income of about one hundred and twenty pounds per annum, arising from a clerkship in a public office, was all kind-hearted Christopher possessed; and therefore, though it was evident he "had the will, he had not the way," to render any pecuniary assistance. Still he was determined to save his brother if he could; and he knew, if the capture were not made on that night (the morrow being Sunday), that there might probably be time to raise means sufficient to secure Oxymel's ultimate escape.

These hopes, however, were immediately frustrated. A loud knock being heard at the street-door, Christopher looked out of the parlour window, and seeing two suspicious-looking fellows in a hackney-coach, he advised his brother to hurry up stairs and conceal himself in the attics. Oxymel complied, and his friendly ally rushed into the passage with the view of preventing the servant from opening the street-door. In vain—it was already opened; and Christopher returned into the parlour, where the two bailiffs (both *particularly* drunk) instantly forced their way, the maid-servant following in a state of the utmost surprise and alarm.

"So," cried Timothy Twitch, the principal sheriff's officer, "we have caught you at last, Master Shycock; and as we know you've no garnish-money, come at once to quod;"—both violently seizing him.

"Keep off, scoundrels!" replied Christopher; "and at your peril touch me!"

"Baw!—gammon!—Pull him along, Nab."

"Hold! I warn you for your own sakes—I am not the person."

"What!—we've got the wrong sow by the ear, have we?—ha! ha!—Likely joh! I say" (turning to the servant), "Lucy, Mary, isn't this fellow named Oxymel?"

"Why certainly," she answered, "his name is Oxymel; but I suspect——"

"And so *don't I* suspect! We know of old these sneaking shycocks will deny their names."

"No; I admit my name is Oxymel, but—"

"There, Nab!—To him, Nab—to him!"

Here they both again violently laid hold of him.

"Besotted, drunken knaves! But mark—once more I warn, once more I give you notice, that if you still persist in this illegal outrage——"

"Psha! you'll soon change your note; for when you arrive at my mansion you'll find such fine suitable furniture, such rich wines, and such good company—plenty of people of fashion there, my boy!—aren't there, Nab?—But come, I say, come. Nay, then, by the elevens!—"

Here, without any further ceremony, they hustled him out of the house, and hurrying him into the carriage, it soon drove off; when on their way, in consequence of additional threats from Christopher, the dispute arose to such a furious height, that, on arriving at the destined place, the unfortunate prisoner saw nothing of the grand mansion or its fashionable visitors, for he was forcibly conducted into the cage, and there locked up for the night*.

* In Capias' lock-up house, as in others, the yard at the back is surrounded and covered with open iron bars, so that the engaged prisoners are all night exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

Whilst this was passing at Mr. Twitch's, Oxymel, "the real Simon Pure," crepted from his hiding-place, and hearing that his kind brother had been thus violently treated, he (Oxymel) on his part became outrageous, and determined at any rate to attempt a rescue. But then arose new distresses: where was he to find the officer? He knew not either his name or address, or any person from whom he could procure it. Under these circumstances, sleep being out of the question, he threw himself on the sofa, resolving to wait patiently till the morning, when his brother would naturally make some communication to him.

The morning came; and the clock struck eight, nine, ten, and still no news of Christopher: eleven also was fast approaching, when, at the very moment the clock commenced striking, his well-known knock was heard. Oxymel flew to answer it, and in an instant the two brothers were in each other's arms. After a short pause, Christopher first broke silence by exclaiming—

"Oh Henry! I fear you have passed a terribly anxious night."

"Nay," replied Oxymel, "think not of my trifling sufferings; relate to me your own—all that has passed since they bore you so forcibly away."

"Well, then; on my arrival at the spunging-house*,

* *Unde derivatur?* for certa'ny a spunging-house is the last house to *spunge* in.

they forced me into the cage, and there locked me up for the night.” *

“ Brutes!—savages!”

“ Why it certainly was not a very gentlemanlike transaction, nor, as you may suppose, did I pass the night in very gentlemanlike company. However, when in the morning they unlocked our iron chamber, and Mr. Nab inquired which of us could afford to have breakfast, I, in a manner somewhat conciliating, presented him a sovereign, and showing him three or four more, the seeker after *garnish* (as they call it) not only altered his tone, but ushered me into the parlour.”

“ Sordid, hypocritical knaves!—But what passed there?”

“ On entering the room, which was certainly very elegantly furnished, he introduced me to Miss Georgiana Twitch, who was playing on the piano-forte, and singing a very *appropriate* air, namely, ‘ Home, sweet home! ’ I requested that I might not interrupt her; and after listening attentively to this and other tunes, I expressed my admiration, and with such apparent sincerity that I soon found her sufficiently interested to induce me to ask her a favour—viz. to persuade her father to permit two friends to call upon me.”

“ I see—I understand!—Well-managed, Christopher!”

“ Yes; for, on the favour being granted, in less than an hour afterwards two good fellows—clerks in my

office—arrived, and then—ha! ha!—both of them at the same time ejaculated—‘ Why, Christopher!—Christopher Oxymel!—what in the d—l’s name brought you here?’ ‘ Ask the curmudgeon Mr. Twitch there,’ I replied. ‘ Christopher!’ exclaimed the agitated shoulder-tapper, at the same time taking from his pocket the *writ* on which I was *captured*. ‘ Christopher!—why it is—no!—yes!—the *true* bill is ‘ Henry—Henry Oxymel!—Dash my wig, here’s a go, Nab!—we’ve arrested the wrong man!’

“ Vy, yes, master,” rejoined the little follower; “ ve have got the wrong sow by the ear!”

“ To be sure,” continued I; “ a false, foreible capture, gentlemen, and after due notice, in the presence of a witness; so I say—a word in your ear, Master Garnish—what’s to pay?—*not* what have I to pay *you*, but what have you *not* to pay *me*? ”

“ Pooh!—Come, Nab, let us go and bag the right bird.”

“ And what then?—Will that save you from my smug little action for assault, battery, and false imprisonment?—Ahem!—damages two hundred, costs one hundred, and, judgment being entered up, I’ll take care to ‘ bag the right bird! ’—So I say again, what’s to pay, Muster Garnish? ”

“ Bravo, noble Christopher!—bravo!—and the result was——”

“ Why that, dreading likewise his dismissal from

office, I compromised the matter by taking, in the shape of hush-money, this one hundred pounds bank-note, which I freely transfer to you, dear Henry; but remember, though, like other *Sunday-men*, you are safe at this moment, yet, to-morrow being black Monday, if you do not start instantly in one of the coaches for Dover, Mr. Twitch and, at his instigation, a host of other Twitches, will take care that their right *bird* shall be *caged* again."

Such was Henry Oxymel's narrative, and which concluded with his stating that he instantly followed his brother's advice, and, having landed next morning at Calais, soon after journeyed to Paris, and thence to Italy.

"Well," rejoined our hero, "but may I ask why you think of returning to a country where you will again be harassed by duns, lawyers, and the before-named hosts of Twitches?"

"Nay—thanks to my indefatigable brother—my creditors have granted me a letter of licence for three years, and at the end of that period, I hope, by the profits of a new journal, to be enabled to pay every man his own. Then, thank fortune! adieu to law, lawyers, and all their quibbling, wrangling propensities."

"Ay, Oxymel, leave them to wrangle amongst each other—a practice which of late years has become so much a legal fashion, that some of our Westminster-Hall heroes, forgetting their clients' quarrels in their

own, suddenly convert themselves into a new plaintiff and defendant, and brawl forth such home coarse vituperations——”

“ True, Vivid; formerly they used to brow-beat witnesses, now they brow-beat one another, and so defyingly, that ere long, who knows but the *four* courts may resemble, as punsters would say, the *five* courts?”

Here Alltaet announcing that a ship would sail for England in the evening, they hastened to the pier, reserving further remarks on the Westminster-Hall pugnacions black infantry, till a future opportunity.



CHAPTER XVI.

Mysterious letter from Captain Morden—Continuity of the “lost and found” incident—Rome; Naples, and the “green-eyed monster” in high force—A sofa-bed, and the formidable Lord Orlando de Courcy—The opera and an old intruder—A popular romance—A double discovery—“All hands” for Malta—and four-in-hand driven by a four-footed coachman.

WHILST Oxymel and Vivid are sailing towards their native land we trust the reader will allow us to remind him that we left the Carisbrook party on the road to Sienna, where they expected to receive letters, and in which hope they were not disappointed. Amongst others they found one from Captain Morden, who gratefully acknowledged the receipt of Lord Carisbrook’s letter from Paris, in which his lordship had stated that he and Lady Morden were thus far advanced on their road to Malta. This part of the captain’s letter was considered “quite satisfactory; but when he concluded by imploring them, “for many reasons, *to use no delay*,” and did not communicate what those reasons were, Lady Henrietta and her cousin could not help thinking that “more was meant than met the sight *.”

* “Sight” substituted for “ear.”

On his lordship, however, these words produced a different impression, for he thought they were purposely, nay, cunningly introduced to give an additional impetus to their motions.

Mrs. Almack, never differing from his lordship, instantly came round to his opinion; not so Lady Henrietta: the "many reasons" dwelt more and more upon her mind; for amongst other painful conjectures, she feared that her conduct with regard to Vivid had, through the agency of her enemies, been falsely represented, and consequently that he felt impatient to receive an ample explanation. Knowing she could give such explanation, she was as anxious as himself to avoid delay, and from that moment panted for the hour of her arrival at Malta.

Lord Carisbrook having received at Sienna all the letters he expected, ordered the carriages to be got ready; when, just on the eve of their departure, they were hailed and stopped by the Florence courier, who presenting his master's packet to Lady Morden, she (after expressing some surprise) opened it, and was by no means displeased at recovering property which she had given up as for ever lost; but when she read the landlord's accompanying note, then "came her fit again;" which being soon observed by her father, she placed the packet in his hands: After looking over the contents he exclaimed—

"Well done again, Master Vivid! Why, Henrietta, he seems to be a sort of guardian genius, watch-

ing over both your life and your property. Oh! that he had been a naval officer! then —; but as it is, though he cannot succeed by means of the god of war, there is hope of his succeeding by the aid of a lesser god: ay, some day or other may little Cupid pilot him to a wife as young, wealthy, and handsome as —you know whom." Eh!—don't you say so, Henrietta?"

"Sir," she replied, "I should be most ungrateful, if I did not wish Mr. Vivid all the happiness this fleeting world can yield."

"And I wish him the same," rejoined Mrs. Almack; "but, Henrietta, is it not very odd you don't recollect where you lost the purse?"

"True; but I have now the means of ascertaining. Inform me, courier, where was the money found?"

"Why, as I understand," he replied, "the gentleman found it in the bedchamber where he last night slept; and which chamber, it appears, your ladyship occupied the night before."

This information caused a modest blush to overspread and beautify the fair inquirer's countenance; but the interest being not altogether lessened by this curious circumstance, she gave the prompt replyer two napoleons, and could not resist adding—

"If, on your return, you find the gentleman still at the hotel, pray say that Lady Morlen feels *again* much, much indebted to him."

Here the courier took his leave; but thanks to the

napoleens, he got so insufferably drunk on the road, that on his arrival at Florence he forgot to deliver the message—luckily forgot it; since, in Vivid's present state of mind, it would only have created new and additionally unpleasant excitement.

Meeting Captain Morden's urgent wishes, Lord Carisbrook hastened on towards Malta; and as a proof he used all possible despatch, he slept on that night at Montefiascone, on the next at Rome, and on the fourth night at the far-famed paradise of Italy—Naples: where, next morning, Mrs. Almack made an odd discovery. In poor but close imitation of her apathetical daughter, she forgot, until her arrival in this city, that amongst other letters forwarded to Sienna she had received one from Sir Henry Rectley.

The truth was, that having as usual skimmed over the contents without knowing or caring of what they consisted, she had thrown the letter aside; but now accidentally taking it up again, she found that Sir Henry not only gave an account of the singular elopement of her daughter from Lyons, but added, that if he did not watch her with a lynx's eye, she would indubitably make her second appearance in the same character. He likewise stated, that as they had taken up their residence at Naples for the winter, and he understood that she (Mrs. Almack), Lord Carisbrook, and Lady Morden intended to visit that city, he hoped to see them at his house on the Chiaja.

Thither, therefore, soon after breakfast, accompanied by Lady Henrietta, the affectionate matron repaired. Being informed that Lady Reesley was in her boudoir, they hastened to that *sanctum sanctorum*, and there found her seated on a sofa, with her shawl lying near her, and apparently covering and keeping warm her favourite large poodle, Bijou. After the usual salutations, Mrs. Almack inquired for Sir Henry, and added, "I hope that notwithstanding the late unlucky event, there has been on his part no diminution of love."

"Diminution!" Lady Reesley replied. "Lord! I wish there had been; for the man's love has latterly so increased, and become so preposterously troublesome—dear, it's quite shocking!"

"There," rejoined the dowager, "these married *cuisines* so soon grow sick of an amiable domestic wife, that nothing can restore their taste but the threat of a little high-seasoned French dish, called *liaison*. Yet say, Letitia, how does he thus annoy you?"

"How! why he is become not only jealous of Bijou, but of a book, a looking-glass, a fan, a—in short, I wish, mother, you would persuade the tiresome, love-lorn creature to let me alone."

"Ay, and now and then to leave you alone; for by this account he never allows you to be out of his sight."

"Never, except that he has been absent the last

three days. And suppose, now, I were jealous? but, Lord! I wouldn't take the trouble."

" Three days! gracious—why, where is he gone?"

" Oh! he is gone with my only rival, the Favorita, a new yacht which he has just purchased, and on board of which he knew (after the Richmond expedition) only force could have got me, so he went alone; and, as he intended to return the next day, I guess the teasing animal has been detained by contrary winds."

" No doubt; and on his return, I *suppose* your conduct will be finely scrutinized."

" Of course; the 'green-eyed monster' will be so much on the alert, that I should not wonder if the silly man literally became jealous of my new visiter—Lord Orlando de Conrey?"

" Lord Orlando de Conrey!—why, who is he? I never heard of such a title—did you, Henrietta?"

" No—never."

" Oh, he is a near relative of the Duchess of Todleton, who arrived in Naples only the day before yesterday; and who having little time to spare, and wishing immediately to visit Herculaneum and Pompeii, requested me, in her absence, to give Lord Orlando house-room."

" And you did! Well! I hope he is no impostor; and certainly Debrett's Peerage is so crammed with Lords Augustus *Somebody*, and Lords Adolphus *Something*, that one cannot recollect——"

Here the door flew open, and a maid-servant rushed

in, crying out—"My lady, I've only one moment to prepare you for such a scene! Sir Henry is below; and on his asking me if you had admitted any male visiter since he left, I answered only one—Lord Orlando de Courcy: and oh being further cross-examined I admitted (for you know there is no harm, your ladyship, in the matter) that he slept here last night, and was now in the house; on which, without waiting one moment for any further explanation, he rushed out of the room, and, vowing vengeance against his lordship, hastened in search of him."

"Calling him, I presume," coolly replied Lady Reefley, "seducer! villain!—ha! ha!"

"Nay, Letitia," exclaimed the astonished mother, "this is no laughing matter, I assure you."

At this moment they were interrupted by Sir Henry's exclaiming, in a loud authoritative tone without—

"Where is this base betrayer of my honour? Behold, madam! (speaking as he entered) behold your wronged, degraded husband!—How! Mrs. Almack—Lady Morden! So—'tis well! for you shall witness I condemn her not unheard.—Speak! now, in the presence of your friend and mother, confess that this detested, this unknown Lord Orlando de Courcy slept here last night."

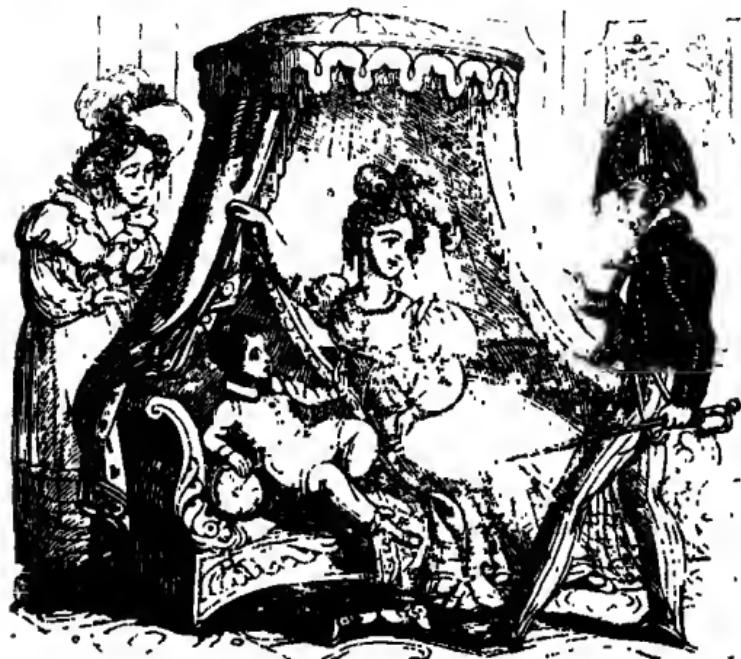
"Why, to be sure lie did!—ha! ha!"

"You hear," replied Sir Henry, addressing Lady H. and Mrs. A., "she glories in her guilt!"

"Shame, Letitia!—(indignantly and at the same

moment exclaimed Mrs. Abnack and Lady Henrietta)—“retract, deny ——”

“Never!—I say, his lordship slept last night here, on this sofa-bed.—Ay; and sleeps here still. There!”—raising the shawl and discovering a beautiful and elegantly dressed boy, about four years old—“there—there is the terrific Lord Orlando de Courcy!”



“Heir,” she continued, “to the Marquis of Bellecourt, grandson to the Duchess of Toddleton, and my dear chamber companion—(giving him a kiss). So,

and now let us have no more agitation ; for, I declare, I am so exhausted that I never was so near having a little fit in my life."

Lady Henrietta and her cousin, though somewhat disconcerted at having thus wrongly suspected Lady Reefley, yet were delighted at the discovery—particularly as such a lesson they hoped would, at least, partly cure a silly and suspicious husband's fantasies.

As to Sir Henry, he remained fixed like a statue, and staring wildly at the little object of his jealousy, who (as may be imagined) stared in return. At length, however, convinced that the confusion had solely arisen from his own folly and impatience, the humbled husband acknowledged that had he listened to the servant's explanation, he should at once have been convinced of his own absurd suspicions and his wife's innocence. Then imploring her pardon, swearing the fault was in his head and not his heart, and taking her hand and kissing it, he exclaimed—"From this moment, beloved Letitia, away with jealousy for ever!"

"Lord!" she replied, "don't pester me with promises, Sir Henry; and suppose you do give up jealousy—what then? Why, you'll only be what you were before—nothing, nobody."

"Right, girl," said Mrs. Almack.

"Oh, no! we never mention it,"
(humming the tune.)

"Nay, I own I merit your reproaches, and grave

ones I could bear with firmness; but this severe, this cruel hantering—speak, intereede for me, kind Lady Henrietta."

"Come, Letitia, surely it is time this *bardinage* should cease; and since I know you are of a forgiving nature ——"

"Am I? I can't say, but as I know I'm of a forgetful one—there, there's my hand, Henry.

Here, all gratitude, he renewed his promises; and the next morning, calling on the duchess, he related the whole of the adventures of the day before, and which she acknowledged were far more entertaining than her own; since, by her Hereulancum and Pompeii *lionizing*, she had brought home nothing to remember, except a cold and a *feveret*.

Lord Carisbrook having hired a fast-sailing vessel, determined, if the wind proved favourable, to commence their voyage next morning. It was also resolved, that as this was the last night they intended to remain in Naples, the evening could not be better passed than in visiting the handsomest theatre in Europe—San Carlo. On entering their box (which they had procured in the morning), accompanied by Sir Henry and Lady Reefley, they were astonished to find a strange tenant already in possession. However, he soon proved to be not altogether unknown to them, as appeared by the following familiar address to Mrs. Almaek and Lady Reefley.

"Only arrived, *mes belles amies*, about an hour ago;

and, putting up at your hotel, first ordered dinner.—That over, inquiring whether any English had taken up their residence there, some of your names were mentioned; but the waiter adding, you were at the Chiaja, whence you intended to proceed to the opera, thinks I, I'll start before and agreeably surprise them. And I did start—and here I am—he! he!"—(Tittering and taking snuff.)

If the reader do not already recognise this free-and-easy personage, let him remember, that one of our *dramatis personæ*, who some time ago on leaving Geneva journeyed towards Italy, was ycleped Blasé Bronzely; and who now, notwithstanding, the cool reception he met with from the whole party, so decidedly took the lead, that any stranger would have supposed the box was *his*, and not Lord Carisbrook's. The performances were the opera of Otello and the grand *ballet* of Calypso. In the former, Desdemona was represented by the celebrated *prima donna*, Altissima, at the end of each of whose *bravuras* the house rang with applause, in which, to the surprise of his party, Lord Carisbrook heartily joining, "What!" exclaimed Mrs. Almack, "you, cousin, who, after hearing 'Blackeyed Susan,' and other such old English ballads, regularly cry 'encore'—you thus ecstatic at the conclusion of a *bravura*."

"Mess!" replied his lordship, "that's it, coz; I am charmed because it is concluded. Why, at sea one's prepared for a *squall*, but——"

"A squall!" interrupted Bronzely; "shocking!—stop him, ladies, or positively we shall all be *stifled*."

However, probably others were not much more entertained than his lordship, for "Otello" altogether went off very dully; so much so, that Mrs. Almack remarked, the composer's magical power was lost in the improbabilities and dulness of the drama.

"So think I," replied "Sir Oracle;" "and some of you will deem it odd, but, in my opinion, the original play is equally tiresome and stupid."

"What!" inquired Lady Henrietta, "Shakspeare's play, sir?"

"Ay, Shakspeare's! the 'Go to'—'Now, by my holy dame'—'Good Morrow, good master lieutenant' man—he! he!"

"And this, sir, is your opinion of our immortal bard?—a poet so inspired, that time itself——"

"Nay! in fairness, I must admit that the old swan of Avon has sent forth some good lines."

"Indeed!" continued Lady Henrietta; "perhaps, then, you will condescend to quote a few of them."

"Why, let me see—oh yes, I recollect and much admire the following:

"Conscience!

The protesting lover buys hope with it,
And the deluded virgin short-lived pleasure.
Old greybeards cram their avarice with it;
Your lank-jaw'd, hungry judge will dine upon it,
And hang——"

"Merey! Mr. Bronzely, why, these lines are not written by Shakspeare."

"Really!—eh!—what! Shakspeare did not write Richard the Third?—ha! ha! ha!"

"Oh yes! that is notorious; but Cibber altered it, and these lines are wholly Cibber's."

"There!" cried Mrs. Almanack; "and I hope you do not doubt the accuracy of one so universally well read as Lady Henrietta."

"Oh! by no means: I've no doubt her ladyship's right; and I ought at once to have known that it was impossible the old *dear* and *idea* stealer could ever have written any thing half so natural and poetical.—Bravo, Cibber! I'll add you to my list; though, *entre nous*, after all, what do we moderns care for these old obsolete—"

Lady Henrietta smiled, and was again about to correct him, when she was interrupted by the commencement of the *ballet* of Calypso, in which there was displayed much beautiful scenery, and a variety of splendid dresses; but in the *materiel*—in all that related to the action, Calypso fell far short of Masaniello and other *ballets*, latterly produced at the King's Theatre*. At the conclusion of the performance they returned to the hotel, and after supper (to which, of course, "Sir Oracle" invited himself) the conversation turned

* This improvement in our *ballets* is attributable to the good taste and liberality of the present manager, M. Laporte.

upon modern novels and romances ; and on this subject the two circulating-library *blues*, Mrs. Almack and her daughter, deeming themselves particularly *au fait*, dictatorially proclaimed that a new work, under the title of "AZEMIA," decidedly rivalled, if not surpassed, all other romances. Sir Henry Reesley also spoke of "Azemia" in terms of the highest panegyric. Even Lord Carisbrook, though he never read romances, acknowledged that he had often heard it highly extolled at the Naval and United Service Clubs ; and that every body was anxious to know who was the talented author.

"Ay!" said Mrs. Almack, "is it not astonishing, that after success almost unprecedented, this author, unlike other authors, should be so modest as not to divulge his name?—How! what means that significant smile, Mr. Bronzely?—probably you know the mysterious gentleman? If so, pray satisfy our curiosity."

"Ay! pray," exclaimed Lady Reesley.

"Ahem!" replied Bronzely.

"Ahem!" reiterated Mrs. Almack. "What, sir, are you aiming at?"

"Nothing—I mean nothing; only, though 'tis known I despise the character of a tatler, yet, after this unexpected, overpowering praise, I—but stop, probably Lady Henrietta has read 'Azemia?' if so, I

should like first to be favoured with her most valuable opinions?"

" Ay! and so should we," rejoined both the *blues*.

" As I am thus called upon," replied Lady Henrietta, "'Azemia', in my humble judgment, is full of faults; but, nevertheless, I prefer it to most modern romances.—Yes," she added, smiling and in a playful manner, "and for this simple reason; it is free from those *no-meaning* rants—those affected rhapsodic flights, which, describing the 'hurricane of the heart,'—'the tornado of the soul,'—'the avalanche of the mind,'—and 'the consummate draughts on the hot revolving brain,' are equally degrading to the writer and the reader, who both

' Ill-judging and verbose, from Lethe's lake
Draw *tuns* unmeasurable!'"

" There!—I was right,—I determined to avoid all such sickening, hyperbolical trash!"

" You!" interrupted one and all, " you avoid!—Are *you*, then, the author?"

" Fie! did I say so?—No, no! or if I did—honour—I throw myself on the honour of this most honourable company.—Mum—for pity's sake, mum!"

Mrs. Almack and Sir Henry Reçfley, who were well acquainted with Bronzely's real character, suspected that, according to his usual custom, he was again

claiming a triumph to which he had not the slightest pretension. And they both suspected rightly; but the vain boaster, aware that in this instance he could not at least immediately be detected, made the most of his time, and so consequentially rode the “literary high horse,” that his conversation became more and more repulsive and unbearable.

“I think,” he exclaimed, tossing up his head, “I shall at last be prevailed upon to relieve an anxious public and put my name to the next edition, in which case I shall compliment somebody with a dedication—possibly” (looking archly at Lady Henrietta) “one of the present company.”

At this moment he was again interrupted by the waiter entering and announcing that the mail from England had just arrived.

“Well! and what then?” continued Bronzely: “go—evaporate, you stupid hound, or I’ll——”

“Nay, sir, my master having received some of the latest London newspapers, ordered me to ask Lord Carishbrook if he wished to peruse them.”

“To be sure I do!” replied his lordship: “where are they?”

“Here, my lord.”

“Upon my word, a most liberal supply. Times, Herald, Chronicle—there, there’s one for you, Henrietta, and for you, cousin, and for you, Sir Henry, and when

you come to any important intelligence, please to communicate it."

To Bronzely's great annoyance they all turned from him, and began reading to themselves. The first who broke silence was Mrs. Almack.

"Well!" she exclaimed, "this is welcome news for you, cousin. At a meeting held yesterday of the members of the Royal Yacht Club, they voted a gold cup to their chief patron, Lord Carisbrook."

"Indeed!" replied his lordship, "then, if I injure my own health in drinking theirs, see if this glorious cup ever stands empty."

"And here!" ejaculated Sir Henry, "here is welcome news for all of us—ha! ha! ha!—listen," (reading from the newspaper), "here it is, a paragraph headed 'The secret's out.'—It appears, by an advertisement in the front column of our paper, that a young barrister of the name of Chatterton has at length avowed himself to be author of the successful new romance called AZEMIA."

"What!" vociferated Bronzely.

"Ay!" scoffed Sir Henry, "look on this picture and on this—there is the paragraph, you see, and now here is the more damning proof—the advertisement—observe—

‘ This day is published
AZEMIA. Tenth Edition.—By HORATIO CHAT-
TERTON, Barrister.’ ”

This last blow was too strong even for the consummately impudent Mr. Bronzely to bear up against, and having first eyed the advertisement, and next eyed the door, he turned round and suddenly bolted, whilst they all laughed, and Sir Henry hallooed after him

“Bravo! a second edition of another *romance!*
LADY SENSITIVE, OR THE SUCKING-PIG.”

This new instance of the super-eminent *self puff*-direct was so productive of further entertainment, that it continued till they separated for the night.

When it is recollected that Bronzely left Geneva with his finances at a very low ebb, it may be deemed extraordinary how he could so well have carried on the war as to have advanced as far as Naples. The truth is, some people can get on without money almost as well as with it; and that he was one of those ingenuous “hand to mouth” gentlemen is pretty evident. At Florence he contrived to raise a tolerable quantity of small loans by waiting on some of the noble English *exclusives* resident in that city (with whom he had formerly been intimate), at first by cunningly alarming them with the supposition that he came to ask a great pecuniary favour, and thus gradually working them up to believe that the least sum he could possibly require would be one or two hundred pounds, they were naturally much surprised and delighted when he

condescendingly let them off for as many hundred *shillings*. In fact, some of the lenders actually felt more grateful than the borrower; for such was his high opinion of his own claims and pretensions, that he walked away (as usual), voting that he had conferred a favour by accepting one.

On the following morning, Lady Henrietta having risen with the dawn, and still harping on "the many reasons," anxiously inquired of her father whether the wind continued fair. On his answering in the affirmative, she was much gratified, but became soon much more so, for in less than one hour after they had embarked, she found they had lost sight of Naples, and were sailing towards Malta with every hope of a rapid and prosperous voyage; yet, notwithstanding present bright appearances, she considerably exclaimed, with Dryden,

" Who knows what adverse fortune may befall?
Arm well your mind—hope little and fear all."

As to Lord Carisbrook and his cousin, being heartily sick of the continent, they had an additional motive for hailing the bright prospect, since they rejoiced to leave behind them the Recfleys, the Bronzelys, the Sir Pets, and other blatant *anglo* cattle, who not only selfishly expend their incomes abroad, and avoid the

payment of taxes at home, but, on the first rumour of a revolution, take fright and hurry away like so many kindred lowing, braying stragglers, when urged on by the whips of ferocious drovers.



CHAPTER XVII.

Our theatrical tourist at home—How to write a comedy—Dependence of dramatists, and power of hissers—Another storm and new tragical event—Laurcl in perspective—Reading a play in the green-room—“The night which either makes him or undoes him quite”—Dr. Goldsmith and the brick-kilns—Sam Alltact and a new comic event.

As it has been seen that during Vivid's passage from Leghorn to England our heroine was not forgotten, but, on the contrary, was properly noticed and recurred to, so, impartial reader, would it be acting fairly, during her voyage to Malta, if our hero were not treated in a similarly respectful manner? “Most indubitably not,” you will say; and therefore be it known, that after a long and stormy passage, our tourist, Ozymel, and Sam Alltact landed at Portsmouth, whence, having partaken of a parting dinner, the latter left for London and the former for Ryde. On reaching the pier, both master and man perceived not only strange alterations in the town itself, but also many more strange alterations in the company, which formerly used to be tolerably select, but now the

steamers (owing to their crossing and re-crossing no less than four times a day) land such enormous shoals of smoke-dried Londoners, replete with Trinculo's "ancient and fish-like smell," that instead of packets disembarking civilised passengers, they much more resemble herking-smacks when being unloaded of their stale, finny ship's company.

Still, in one part of the town, they found no alteration whatever, for Dr. Vivid's house, both within and without, remained the same. After the joy attendant on a most warm and affectionate meeting had in some degree subsided, one of our hero's first questions naturally related to the chancery-suit, when the doctor's answers were most satisfactory; for he stated, that though the defeated defendants at one time threatened to appeal to the House of Lords for the reversal of the Lord Chancellor's decree, yet they soon grew wiser, and being convinced of the truth of the old adage, that "the first loss is the least," they abandoned their original intentions; thus leaving the successful plaintiff, not only in quiet possession of an annuity of eight hundred pounds, but also of the sum of seven thousand pounds, due to him for arrears and interest.

"There! and now," added the warm-hearted father, "since I mean to settle upon you five hundred per annum whilst I live, and bequeath you the rest of my fortune at my death, I trust you will deem your-

self so far independent, as not to allow either legal or literary labour to interfere with your health. Remember, Henry,

"The brain too finely wrought
Preys on itself, and is destroyed by thought."

For this additional proof of paternal affection Vivid most warmly expressed his gratitude; but having nearly completed the plan of his new comedy, and sketched out a few of the scenes, he acknowledged that he had gone much too far to retract. Besides, he had now another motive for courting the dramatic muse—in her alluring charms he trusted he should, in some small degree, forget those of one whom fate decreed he *should* forget. As to the doctor, being more and more convinced that the *ardour* was too strong to be resisted, and consequently that argument would prove of no avail, he took him by the hand and heartily wished him success.

Having already called his comedy the "VULGARITY OF FASHION," our buoyant dramatist wisely intended writing up to the title, and to exhibit and lash the "manners living as they rise." During the first week he toiled so incessantly, yet made such little progress, that sympathetic Sam, on the impulse of the moment, actually thought of offering to help him; but fearing that this presumptuous sort of Beaumont and Fletcher proposal might give offence, he tacked about, and, in

the way of hint, and in the hope of saving time and trouble, merely spouted the following couplet:

"Now bards, like tars, their hostile fire can't quench,
For plays, like ships, are taken from the French."

In fact, he recommended the writing by steam—otherwise "cribbing" from *Vaudeville**. Vivid took the honest fellow's advice in good part, but declined following it; maintaining that the object of his ambition could only be obtained by completing a strong, original, and satirical five-act comedy. Such was his industry and perseverance, that during the first six weeks he excluded himself from all society (except his father's), and shut himself up in his study. At the termination of this period Lord and Lady Orville arrived at Ryde, and in the absence of Lord Carrisbrook took up their residence in his lordship's mansion, when, having been informed of their friend Vivid's total seclusion, they determined on interrupting it; and for this purpose they gave him a general invitation, begging him to dine with them every day. This request being strongly followed up by the doctor,

* Modern dramatists are completely justified in adopting this system; for when the company is *shy*, and the cash is *shy*, no^t but a rich or independent author can afford to devote a whole year's labour to the composition of that *precious* commodity, a comedy in five acts; and certainly several living dramatists are fully capable of producing such commodity.

he (Vivid) made up his mind for once to give himself a holiday.

Accordingly, on the next day he visited Carishrook-house, and those doors which formerly had been so unjustly closed against him now not only instantaneously flew open, but both host and hostess gave him a most cordial reception. Still, however, perceiving from his altered appearance that his present mode of life was very detrimental to his health, they kindly resolved to endeavour to laugh him out of this dramatic hobby-horse.

"Come, Vivid," said Lord Orville, "let me remind you of one of your own theatrical observations, viz.—that on the first night of a new play a single hiss would prove as mischievous as a drop of rennet in a howl of milk; so that if the author had to encounter a dozen well-packed enemies—and who has not enemies?—at least, what man who has pride, spirit, independence —"

"How, Orville! is it a merit, then, to have enemies?" interrupted Lady Orville.

"Not exactly, Eleanor; but remember what is set forth in ancient lore—'woe to that man whom every body *praises!*'—and, thank fortune! every body does ~~not~~ praise our friend here—and why? because he never sought popularity by the display of any mean mohsyephancy; nor did he 'stop as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.'"

"Why, certainly there are persons who do not speak so well of Mr. Vivid as he deserves, namely, Count Montnoir's friends and Lady Ardourly."

"True, Eleanor; and would you wish such persons to speak well of him?"

"Oh! by no means; I should myself far prefer their censure to their praise: but recollect, my lord, if there be danger in twelve packed opponents, and this revengeful woman be still in existence——"

"True; and she *is* in existence;—ay, and, if the newspapers of this morning speak truly, she arrived in London only three days ago."

"What!" rejoined Lady Orville: "why, probably she has come purposely to make preparations for this new act of hostility."

"Nay," cried Vivid; "with regard to Lady Ardourly's, or any other vindictive person's opposition, I must take my fate, and, instead of agitating myself with apprehensions of remote danger, I must promptly get over the first danger—that of writing a bad comedy."

"Well," continued Lord Orville, "since I see the die is cast, I will no longer annoy you, but will conclude with saying, Success to yours and Thalia's *tête-à-tête*."

Lady Orville joined in the wish; and they strolled about the grounds of Carishook-house till dinner-time, when they were much interested with our hero's account of his various "accidents by flood and field."

But both his noble host and hostess having heard from Lady Henrietta and her father of his most disinterested conduct, in avoiding the being he evidently so much loved, they delicately declined touching on the subject, and for which reserve he secretly felt so grateful that, on their entreating him to pass the whole of the morrow with them, he consented, notwithstanding, like Titus,

" —— he sighed to lose a day."

The next day proved so extremely tempestuous, and (although as it is well known the sea off Ryde is land-locked) the billows rose to such a tremendous height, that whilst several storm-beat vessels were seen labouring to weather the gale and proceed on their destined voyage, others vainly attempted to reach the land. The sight from Lord Carisbrook's terrace (against which the sea beat) was fearfully grand and awful; and here Vivid took his station. Although very anxious for the safety of many Ryde, St. Helen, and other boats, he became particularly concerned in the fate of a large Southampton one, on board of which there appeared to be two or three elegantly dressed females. The mariners having hauled down the sail, were seen struggling to row the vessel towards Carisbrook-terrace; but the tide as well as the wind proving strongly against them, they made little way; however, by extraordinary perseverance and

effort, they had at length, nearly reached the shore, when, owing to a violent land-squall and a tremendous breaker almost filling the boat, it suddenly upset, and the unfortunate passengers, even in the meridian of their hopes, saw little chance of escaping from a watery grave.

The incessant rain, and the time of the year (dark December), rendered the approach of evening so extremely misty that objects were scarcely distinguishable at the distance of twenty yards. Vivid, however, had seen enough to rouse him into action, and being an excellent swimmer, he threw off his coat and waistcoat, and at once plunging in swam to their assistance.

Notwithstanding the increasing darkness, yet the appalling shrieks of the struggling females piloted him to the scene of danger; and catching hold of one of them, who had evidently risen for the last time, he seized her by the arm, and with considerable difficulty bore her to the shore; there, being himself too much exhausted to render her singly any further service, he called aloud for help; and some of Lord Orville's servants coming to his assistance, he left two of them to take charge of her, whilst, from anxiety and over-exertion, giddiness almost depriving him of sense and sight, he requested the arm of the third, who thus led and supported him into the house, where, however, he displayed sufficient presence of mind to direct that a mattress should be immediately taken to the shore, and,

the fair sufferer having been placed on it, that she should also have the benefit of Lord and Lady Orville's humanity and attention.

When the servant returned to the shore the eyes of the unknown female were completely closed, the countenance exhibited a livid and paralysed appearance, and animation seemed so totally suspended, that each of the attendants believing the vital spark to be extinct, were about to leave her to her fate, when Dr. Vivid, who had been informed of the accident and all the circumstances attached to it, fortunately arrived, and soon ascertaining that pulsation had not entirely ceased, he helped to lay her on the mattress, and, having covered her with a blanket, he ordered her to be carried to Carisbrook-house. As to the other unfortunate passengers, melancholy to relate, only three escaped, and those were sailors.

The doctor requested some of the female servants to place his patient (who, by her fashionable attire, splendid watch, and glittering bracelets and rings, was evidently a person of no mean rank) in a warm bed; and that ceremony having been performed, he began to apply the usual remedies, which in the course of an hour were attended with such success that she opened her eyes, and breathed with tolerable freedom. In another hour she raised herself in the bed, looking wildly around; and, suspiciously surveying every countenance, she exclaimed—

"Heavens! what does this mean?—Where am I?—Oh! now I begin—yes, I recollect—the storm!—I was overwhelmed, lost, when some strange, generous hand was suddenly put forth to raise and save me! Oh! which?—who?—where is my deliverer?"

"Nay, nay," answered the doctor, "be composed; and, as your physician, allow me to state, this is no proper time——"

"It is!—the sight of him will more revive me and will more promote my cure than all your tedious medicinal aid. Sir, I insist——"

"Well, if it must be so, go one of you and call my son."

"Yours! your son!"

"Ay; mine!—and previously to this last humane and noble act, I thought no father boasted such a prize; but now, if through the world another Henry Vivid can be found——"

"Vivid!"

"Ay—what astounds, distresses you? Speak, or those strong convulsive throbs foreboding a relapse—"

"Oh, mighty powers! have I been preserved, but to be thus destroyed? Keep off! think you I'll owe my life to this abhorred, presumptuous villain? No; let me die e'en here; but mark—die loathing, cursing him."

The amazed and agitated parent, soon guessing this could be no other person than Henry's uneasing

persecutor, Lady Ardourly, at once boldly put the question to her, which she having unhesitatingly and haughtily answered, she thus distractedly pursued the conversation.

“ Still, where am I? OH! I perceive—under his father’s roof, and for this new officious act he’ll say again I am indebted; but no, remove and lay me on the desert shore, there the next tide shall bear me from a world that now’s as hated as himself! Despatch! here—here I’ll not remain.”

“ Nay, lady, you’re deceived; you are not in his father’s house.”

“ No!—To whose then has the treacherous villain brought me?”

“ Lord Carisbrook’s.”

The idea that the once despised, discarded Vivid now stood so high in his lordship’s opinion as to be allowed to make use of his mansion, nearly proved fatal. She shuddered, swooned, and for several minutes restoratives were tried in vain. At length, in some degree, she rallied, but so soon relapsed, that the doctor thinking, on every account, he ought not any longer to act alone, called in another physician, who, after having investigated the exact state of the patient, held out little hope of recovery.

Here the door opened, and Vivid, anxious to know the fate of the stranger, was about to enter, when the doctor hurried him away, and in the presence of Lord

and Lady Orville communicated the awful tidings. They were all greatly surprised and shocked; but none expressed much regret, except Lady Orville, who, forgetting the invalid's past misconduct, and only recollecting her present unfortunate situation, kindly visited the sick chamber, in the hope of soothing and composing her; but the attempt proved completely fruitless. Having ruptured a blood-vessel, in trying to rush out of "this horrid abode," as she called it, she was now evidently at the last gasp. Convulsion followed convulsion, and vainly she struggled to give utterance to some incoherent thought which haunted, tortured her; but the voice had entirely sunk inward, the eyes had become fixed, and she died the worst of deaths; for, alas! *she not only lived not to repent*, but to the last was evidently torn with

" Those rods of scorpions and those whips of steel
Which conscience shakes."

Lord Ardourly, though parted from his wife, was still deemed as the most proper person to write to on the occasion; and being at present at his seat in Hampshire, an immediate answer might be expected. Such proved to be the case; and after thanking Vivid for his gallant conduct, and Lord and Lady Orville for their kindness and attention, the noble writer requested that the bearer (his own steward) might take charge of the body of his late wife, as it was his in,

tention to have the remains conveyed to the family vault in Westmoreland. Lady Ardourly's motives for having suddenly sailed from Southampton to Ryde remained undiscovered; but in all probability, ascertaining that Vivid was on the island, she came, as usual, to carry into execution that most violent of all female passions—resentment grafted on disappointed love.

Our hero, who, like his father, considered that the most noble revenge was *a generous forgiveness*, soon buried in oblivion all past injuries; and without allowing even the remembrance of her name to interrupt a single *tête-à-tête* with Thalia, he proceeded with his arduous task more *con amore* than ever. By the end of February the *Vulgarity of Fashion* was completed, and having first obtained his father's full approbation, he next, in imitation of Moliere (who used to consult an old woman), read the new comedy to Sam Alltaet, who was so enraptured, not only with the plot, but with the strength of humour, satire, and character, that in the paroxysm of the moment he jumped about, joyously ejaculating—

“ Damme! if I take any situation short of that of acting manager.”

“ What, Sam!” said Vivid, “ already in the clouds! Come, come, descend from your flight, and remain still on *terrâ firmâ*; at least till two rather important events have taken place—namely, the approbation of the manager and that of the town.”

As to the author, of course he was far less sanguine than the *castle-building* Alltaet, who insisted that this second School for Scandal—this philosopher's stone should be immediately sent to London. Vivid agreed, and, to lessen the torments of suspense, he passed the whole of the next day at Caribbrook-house : but on the following morning, when there was a possibility, though certainly not a probability, of Mr. Candide's returning the awful answer, he, to avoid the dreaded postman's knock, rose early and strolled about the environs. Not so the *castle-builder*—he boldly faced the danger: and danger he literally did face; for on hearing the expected rap at the door, such was his haste that he fell headlong on the kitchen stairs; but soon recovering himself, and standing before the postman, he stammered out—

“ Well! what letters?”

“ Three!” was the reply: “ one for Dr. Vivid;”

“ Psha! that's not it.”

“ Another, for Mr. Sam Alltaet.”

“ Pooh! nor is that it.”

“ And the third,” continued the postman, “ is, as you see, for Henry Vivid, Esquire.”

“ Yes; for Henry Vivid, and *from*—by Gosh! by the hundredth night! and by his own darling, inimitable hand-writing—*from* Mr. Candide!”

Elated with joy and pride, away he ran in search of his master; when meeting him at the top of the hill,

he consequentially placed the letter in his hands, adding, "There, sir—and now, am I in the clouds now?"

"Nay, I admit," answered Vivid, "as far as receiving a prompt reply goes—why, so far so well; but still 'burnt child like'—" Here, having torn open the letter and hastily skimmed over the contents, he exclaimed—"How! what do I read?—Only time to say, comedy in copyist's hands—to be read in green-room with all despatch—perhaps over-sanguine—but, in my opinion—'*Vulgarity of Fashion*'—rivals—if not surpasses, any comedy—acted during last century—Charles Candide.'"

"There!—Hurra! bravo!" shouted Sam.

At this instant Lord and Lady Orville and Dr. Vivid coming up, partook of our hero's triumph, and advised him to depart and be present at "the reading." He gladly followed their counsel, and instantly started for London.

On waiting on Mr. Candide next day, the still unassuming author (for the word "vanity" was not in his dictionary) had further reason to be gratified, since the acting-manager had spoken even more loudly in praise of the comedy than the chief *directeur*: maintaining that the sedan incident in the third act equalled Ranger's celebrated ladder scene, and that the *dénouement* was as rich and characteristic as that of the "Jealous Wife."

"To be sure," he added, "Garrick was the hero of

both these comedies; and unluckily we have not a Garrick now."

"No," said Candide; "nor with all our ingenuity can we *manufacture* one."

On the day of the reading, Vivid attended in the green-room, and he had the satisfaction of hearing the comedy well read by the acting-manager, and well received by the performers. Only one "monarch-player" refused his part, and he refused it not because he thought it a bad part; on the contrary, he admitted it was a very good one, but then another "monarch-player" *had a better part*.

"And am I," exclaimed Roscius the first, "to be second fiddle to Mr. Palaver? I, who on any night will *play* him for five hundred pounds! Sir--Mr. Candide--if you do not treat me with more due homage I shall decidedly abdicate altogether; and then—a word in your ear—how long will it be before you sing, 'Over the water to Charley'?"

Off he strutted, throwing the rejected character on the ground, whilst the triumphant Mr. Palaver hallooed after him—

"Pan quit the plain,
Let Pol remain."

Luckily our manager was provided with an excellent substitute, and next morning Vivid attended the rehearsal, where, except that he was annoyed by two or

three performers asking him for more *green-fat*, i. e. for more jokes; and also by other performers quarrelling about the meaning of some of the author's passages, without ever condescending to apply for such meaning to the author himself; and also by others begging, or rather *demanding*, those sources of confusion and ingratitude—those causes of overflowing houses and empty treasuries—"orders" ; "why, barring these customary peccadilloes, matters went on very smoothly. The subsequent rehearsals proceeded in nearly a similar manner; and at length arrived the day—the important day,

"Big with the fate of *Vivid* and of *fame*."

After taking an early dinner with Mr. Candide in the theatre, and looking at his watch almost every moment, at ten minutes before seven the trembling bard heard the "dreadful note of preparation," i. e. the call-boy's awful warning—"Last music, ladies and gentlemen!" which words ringing in his ears, and reminding him of those Shakspearean ones—"Master Barnardine, you must get up and be hanged," he (*Vivid*) did get up, and, spite of the manager's remonstrances,

* Why should not government *tax* orders? particularly when it is said that above ten thousand were sent into one theatre during two months. The tax might be easily collected, as not a single order shold be admitted unless upon a *one shilling stamp*.

rushed out of the room, and fled he knew not whither. At first, notwithstanding it was a dark and drizzly February evening, he went to the Regent's park; but recollecting that on the first night of the comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," Goldsmith had wandered amongst the brick-kilns in Tothill-fields, our comic hero hastened to this more classical ground.

Having remained in this dreary spot above two hours, he heard the abbey clock strike ten, and aware that his fate would be decided ere he could reach the theatre, he summoned sufficient resolution to be able to quit his retreat, and move, or rather totter, towards the scene of failure or success. Taking his route up the Haymarket, and having passed down Coventry-street, he was proceeding through Leicester-square, when a person, breathless with haste, ran violently against him; and not pausing to apologize, Vivid reproachfully called after him. On this the rude passenger stopped, and turning round (in consequence, as it proved afterwards, of his recollecting the voice), who should approach our hero, stagger, and fall nearly insensible on his shoulder, but Sam Alltaet?

" Speak!" exclaimed Vivid; "what mean you?"

" Why," indistinctly muttered Sam, " it is all—over! —oh—h—h!"

" Oyer!—Heavens! are my hopes blasted then?—Say on!—Well, well, I am prepared——"

" And I," replied Sam, recovering his consciousness—" I'm prepared——"

“Ay, like me, with calm philosophy—with—”

“No—with lights, laurel, music!—Huzza! huzza! Talk of the deputy-managership—pooh!—But come along—coach! coach!—they are all waiting for you in the green-room—princes, lords, and commoners! I thought to find you trembling in the hotel; but this saves time.—Coach!—Oh joy! joy! and bless, bless you, dear, dear master!”

The carriage drawing up, Sam hurried him into it, and ordering the coachman to drive full gallop to the theatre, off they rattled. On their way Sam anxiously inquired where his master had passed his time.

“Why,” he replied, “where Goldsmith, on the first night of ‘She Stoops to Conquer,’ spent his time—in Tothill-fields.”

“What!” wildly continued Sam; “and do you pretend you did not hear the applause and roars of laughter even there? Oh! methinks I hear them now.”

On their arrival at the theatre, Vivid found that the faithful fellow had not in the slightest degree exaggerated or overrated the success; nor had he been less accurate in his description of the number of great personages who were waiting to see and congratulate the new literary wonder.

Such was their adulation and obsequiousness, that when, owing to the crowd and confusion, our hero, and now *their* hero, dropped one of his gloves, at least twenty *elegantes* stooped and scrambled for the glory

of picking it up. Then, again, the numerous invitations he received to dinners, balls, and *fêtes*.—“Remember, Mr. Vivid,” said the Duke of *****, “I spoke first.”—“And I second,” rejoined the Marquis of *****.—“And we third,” exclaimed a host of painters, engravers, publishers, and musical and other dedicators and adulators,



This hot, tumultuous scene (rendered worse by the performers in the new pantomime entering in their

notley dresses) became so insupportable to our exhausted bard, that, in a whisper, he requested Mr. Candide to conduct him out of the room.

This *ruse* was easily put in execution, in consequence of its being supposed that the manager and author had important business to transact. They therefore quietly retired, and the happy dramatist stole away to his hotel, where he found a friend on whose judgment he could perfectly rely—Henry Oxymel, from whom, over a bottle, he learned all the particulars of the genuine and lasting success of the *Vulgarity of Fashion*; and from whom, to his additional gratification, he also heard that his (Oxymel's) new literary speculation had proved so successful, that instead of being behindhand in pecuniary matters, he, like his brother author, was now so far above all sublunary cares, that for the future they were both secure of being able to “kick the world before them.”



CHAPTER XVIII.

"Short and sweet"—One literary good turn deserves another—Hands across and back again towards Malta—The *beast* at his sickening tricks again—The sky brightens, but only *will-with-a-wisp* like, and "the unkindest cut of all"—Parting requests, and return to England.

ON the following morning, the leading journals having all spoken most enthusiastically, not only of the stage but of the closet beauties of the new comedy, and having also prophesied that ere long the author, like another Congreve, Addison, or Sheridan, would be upheld and fostered by the government, Vivid's apartments were so besieged with hosts of idolaters, that at length he exclaimed to Sam—"Shut—shut the door, and say, I'm siek, I'm dead!"

The only two persons whom he admitted were a leading bookseller and a principal actor: with the former he parted on the same good terms on which they had met, for the man of letters gave him his own price for the copyright of his comedy; but with the latter he somewhat disagreed—for Roscius stated that he came in behalf of his brethren of the sock and huskin, who jointly requested that out of the large

profits which would indubitably arise from the success of the new play, he (the author) would not forget to contribute handsomely towards the *Theatrical Fund*.

"What fund?" demanded Vivid.

"Why," replied Roscius, "the *Fund for decayed Actors*."

"Oh, certainly, with all my heart, provided you and your brethren will contribute an equally handsome sum towards the *Fund for decayed Authors*; and surely, since performers now-a-days are so much better paid than we are, this ought not to be deemed a very unfair proposal."

"Nay; but it is not usual for poor actors to—"

"No; nor for poorer dramatists to— You understand. Come, come; when we are as rich as you are, I'll talk to you—till then the smallest contributions will be gratefully received."

To give Roscius his due, he so far felt the justice of the argument, that on his leaving the room Vivid had no occasion to exclaim after him—"Exit in a rage."

The comedy on the next night went off with more *éclat* than even on the first; but although he fairly estimated the value of his success, yet he felt little gratification from being courted and extolled by that fickle, ephemeral throng, which as frequently rally round *four as two-legged lions*. Consequently, preferring substantial to artificial congratulations, he returned to the Isle of Wight, where, in the society of

his father and Lord and Lady Orville, he pursued the noiseless tenor of his way."

There, since it is now incumbent on us to recur to our fair heroine—there for a time we will leave him, reminding our reader that some weeks ago the *Maltese voyageurs* sailed with a fair wind from Naples. Three days afterwards it suddenly changed, and blowing right ahead with tremendous fury, drove the vessel towards the coast of Sardinia. At length, however, by the skill of the ship's company, who willingly acted under the direction of that experienced old sailor, Lord Carisbrook, they weathered the gale, and at the end of forty-eight hours they reached the bay of Palermo, where, after undergoing some slight repair, the ship on the sixth day was again under weigh, and with a favourable wind steering towards the wished-for isle.

The voyage proved so uniformly prosperous, that in less than thirty hours they arrived off Malta; but it being midnight and extremely dark, Lord Carisbrook, to the great discomfiture of our impatient heroine, declined landing. In this determination he was supported by the Neapolitan captain, who said he much doubted whether, at this late hour, the guard at Fort St. Elmo would permit any one to pass; but if it did, all the houses being shut in the city of Valetta, of course no accommodation could be procured. This somewhat composed Lady Morden, and she promised to wait patiently till the morning. This

promise she reluctantly performed; but on the first appearance of dawn, still dwelling on the three awful words, she hurried upon deck, and through the hazy and misty appearance of the morning beholding several men-of-war and large vessels riding in the bay, she anxiously inquired their names; but her curiosity remained unsatisfied, for the Neapolitan captain not having been at Malta for upwards of six months, he naturally could not afford her any information.

Soon after Lord Carishbrook appeared on the deck, and in the highest spirits, arising not only from the prospect of again embracing his dear son-in-law, but also from witnessing the joyful meeting between the so long and so strangely separated couple. Ordering out the long boat (without even glancing his eye at the ships in the bay), his lordship with his daughter and suite instantly entered it, and being rowed by eight stout hands, were speedily off the shore.

The city of Valetta much excited their admiration, and they were particularly struck with the magnificent church of St. John; but when near shore their joy was somewhat checked by the awful tolling of its ponderous bell: nor was this sudden gloomy change of feeling at all mitigated by their hearing minute guns regularly fired, and the muffled drum occasionally beaten.

“What can it mean?” exclaimed Lady Morden.

“Why,” replied Lord Carishbrook, “some person high in office—probably the governor—being dead,

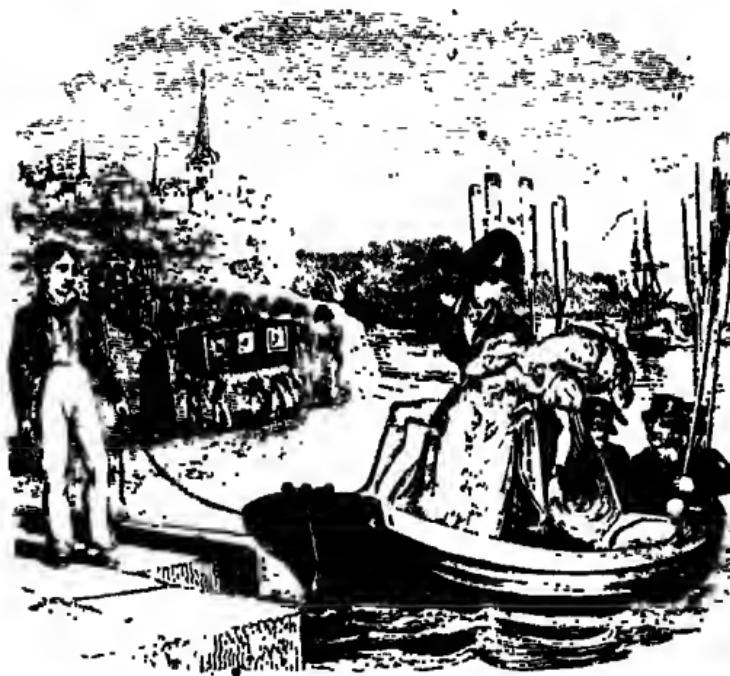
the garrison, according to custom, are honouring his remains with a public funeral. Nay, Henrietta, why should you be thus agitated?—Behold!—I am right—the solemn procession passes the city gates!"

"It does!—and advances!—Mighty Heaven! look—look, my father!—Alas! I have not power!"

Lord Carisbrook did look; but observing the number of military and government officers in attendance, he was more than ever satisfied that it was the burial of some high official personage. However, as it approached near the shore, the dark, fearful tale became unravelled. The coffin at length met his sight; and perceiving on it those two nautical funeral trophies, the sword and gold-laced hat, and also observing that the body was followed by post-captains, lieutenants, midshipmen, and numerous sailors, it was too evident that this was the funeral of a naval officer. Still buoyed up by hope, he persisted in assuring his daughter that, as so many men-of-war were at this period anchored off Malta, it was as likely to be the funeral of some other naval officer as that of Captain Morden. Lady Henrietta could not wholly deny the force of this argument; and as the procession had now reached the shore, she wildly looked amongst the mourners in the hope of discovering her brave, affectionate husband. In vain—he was not to be seen: and the coffin being lowered, and placed in a large boat close to the Neapolitan captain's, Lord Carisbrook hailed the steers-

man, and, in a tone almost indistinct from agitation, asking him to what ship he belonged, the reply, alas! proved final:

“The ‘Protector,’ your honour!”



“And,” continued his lordship, “that coffin contains all that remains of the noble Captain Morden?”

“Even so, your honour.”

At this moment the first lieutenant of the ‘Protector,’ who had the charge of the body, entered the

boat. He immediately recognised Lord Carisbrook and Lady Henrietta, and perceiving that their extreme state of suffering had deprived them of the power both of recollection and of utterance, and also humanely considering that, under such afflicting circumstances, the living had the prior claim on his attention, he immediately left the care of the deceased to the second lieutenant, whilst he himself conducted the helpless survivors to the city.

Here he placed them in the house lately occupied by the captain; and after they had become comparatively composed and restored, he informed them, at their own urgent request, of all the particulars relating to the melancholy catastrophe.

"The fact is," said the lieutenant, "my kind, my lamented commander never recovered from the effects of the storm. The anxiety resulting from personal responsibility, and the fatigue arising from over-exertion and excitement, continued slowly but surely to undermine his constitution; added to which, instead of gaining relief by ordinary repose, the watching and attending to the frigate's repairs constantly kept his mind so much on the stretch, that the decay of his system became daily more and more apparent. Six weeks ago, his medical advisers giving little hope of recovery, I frankly, though sorrowfully, informed him that I thought it his duty to communicate the intelli-

gence to your lordship, and thereby hasten what he had so long and so much sighed for, your own and Lady Henrietta's arrival."

"But he consented not?" she exclaimed.

"No," resumed the lieutenant; "thinking far more of others than himself, he disdained to adopt a proposition which he thought would only unnecessarily alarm and distress those he best loved; but after much persuasion he agreed to introduce, in his last letter three marked words '*for many reasons*,' and which I hoped, if rightly understood——"

"Oh!" interrupted Lady Henrietta, "I knew—I said these memorable words conveyed no common meaning."

"True, true!" rejoined Lord Carisbrook. "And why—ah! why did I so long delay?"

"Nay, my father; was it in our power to guard against your illness at Geneva, or the obstructions we encountered both on land and sea? Oh!—surely 'tis enough to lose——"

"Well, well, Henrietta!—so he complained not—so he died forgiving us!?"

"Forgiving you!" continued the lieutenant;—"hear but his dying request:—'When I am dead,' he said, 'let my body be carried on board the Protector, and there await the orders of my adored wife and her revered father. I can no more; yet say, I die blessing

them, and happy in the hope of one day meeting them in a better world."

"There, my father!—Oh! exalted, generous, noble Morden!—But this—was this his sole request?—Speak, sir!—made he no other?"

"Why, lady, though evidently at the last gasp, he contrived to add—'Tell my executrix, Lady Morden, I wish her to present, as a small token of respect and esteem, my watch and seals to—' Here he paused and wept, but after a violent effort soon thus continued—'to—to one of the most honourable and disinterested of human beings—to Henry Vivid.' Convulsion then followed convulsion; and such, such were poor Morden's last words!" *

This unexpected and additional blow had nearly proved fatal to Lady Henrietta. In vain she attempted to reply, when Lord Carisbrook, perceiving her incapability, assured the lieutenant that he would himself see this just and grateful wish fulfilled. He then, on further inquiry, ascertained that, in consequence of Captain Morden's long intimacy with the governor, and the respect he was held in by the whole garrison, the military and government officers had been ordered to accompany his remains, and thus pay the last tribute of respect to the lamented hero's memory.

For many days grief absorbed all other thoughts; but at the end of a fortnight, orders having been received from the Admiralty directing the "Protector's"

immediate return to England, the first lieutenant of course took the command. He then requested that Lord Carisbrook, Lady Henrietta, and her cousin would do him the honour of accompanying him. This invitation they would cheerfully have accepted, but not even his lordship could summon nerve sufficient to induce him to continue so many days and nights close to the remains of his ever-to-be-regretted friend. The result was that the frigate left Malta on the following morning, and the next day the afflicted relatives of the deceased sailed in the packet for England.



CHAPTER XIX.

More good fortune and success in another theatre—“*Fortuna itrea est, tum cum splendet frangitur*”—A melancholy arrival—Dark clouds arise, but soon disperse again, and a wedding seen in perspective—Return of the “Protector,” and conclusion of “A PLAYWRIGHT’S ADVENTURES.”

VIVID, during his sojourn at the Isle of Wight, proceeded in the composition of a satirical poem, for which when finished he received an unexpectedly large sum. Certain critics and brother bards, who anticipated a failure, were wofully disappointed, for the poem “adding another laurel to his brow,” our hero’s name now soared as high, if not higher, than most of his literary contemporaries. Additional numbers of the first men of the country daily became proud of his correspondence and acquaintance; and amongst others a peer, who had great parliamentary influence, offered to return him as an independent member. Certainly the idea of judging and voting according to his own feelings rendered the offer most tempting, and at any rate, deeming it well worthy due consideration, he wrote to his noble patron, and after thanking him for his very flattering offer, requested two days to

consult and advise with his friends. Lord and Lady Orville and the doctor only blamed him for his diffidence, and so strongly urged him to instantly agree to the marquess's proposal, that Vivid complied, and in a few weeks afterwards took his seat as representative for the borough of —.

Our hero, who, when in the Temple, had frequently attended both the Lords and Commons, was by no means a novice in the art of debating; but aware that superficial knowledge and *jackanapeism* (which might pass muster with forensic speakers) would never for a moment stand against the true parliamentary touchstone, our new member so incessantly pored "o'er science' sickly lamp," that at length having made himself complete master of one important subject (and on which subject he had for some time been partially conversant), he resolved the next time the Chancery question came before the house to hazard his maiden speech, in an attempt to reform the errors and delays of that great labyrinth, where (what is politically new) the *ins* wish to be *outs*—but vainly; for

"Feeing ever, still to fee,
For a lingering last decree—
While till doomsday off you stave it
With a *special affidavit*,
Think in oaths what magic spells lie,
Think of Beaufort versus Wellesley*."

* Vide a poem called "Crockford House."

The night—the awful night, surpassing in importance even the memorable dramatic night, soon arrived, when Vivid, aware of the effects of light and shade, determined not to rise till his speech could be contrasted with that of some tame ineffective speaker. An opportunity soon presented itself in the person of that flower of oratory, Sir Juniper, who having concluded one of his usual ineffective hyperbolical orations, our hero arose, and claiming the indulgence constantly shown on such occasions, commenced a speech which, during a whole hour, continued torrent-like to carry all opposition before it. His style, which was at once nervous and eloquent, simplified what was obscure, and forced its way equally to the head and the heart. In short, having in almost every passage reminded his hearers of that great speaker, who, as Pitt himself acknowledged, “in elegant sallies of thought, in gay effusions of fancy, or in rich dramatic and epigrammatical allusions, was never surpassed *,” our dramatist sat down amidst the unanimous and reiterated cheers of the whole house. Both parties, eager to outdo each other in their commendations and congratulations, pressed around him, and truly asserted that from that moment his political success would most probably rival that of his famed dramatic predecessor.

* Sheridan, who, though a great many of the present day may not personally remember, still must live in the memory of all those who estimate first-rate literary and parliamentary talent.

Honours, rank, and riches were now all within his grasp; and yet even under these most intoxicating circumstances he was not vain—if he felt any pride on the occasion, it was the pride of having worked his way by a life of industry and integrity. Since, however, as for ever

"Envy will merit as its shade pursue,"

so certain would-be orators and briefless barristers consoled themselves in the supposition, that, instead of another Sheridan, Vivid would prove merely a second *single-speech* Hamilton; but their malignant hopes were soon frustrated, for the envied senator's next display of talent (made in the shape of a reply) excelled even his first, and so decidedly had he gained the ear of the house, that thenceforward he was literally as much attended to as the leaders of opposition and government.

The house having adjourned for the Easter holidays, its new and at present perhaps most popular member (though his card-racks tottered with the weight of invitations from whigs, tories, independents, and ministers), still far preferring the comforts of "sweet home" to the adulation of these his splendid followers, again fled to the Isle of Wight, where his reception from those who had urged him on to victory surpassed even his expectations. Still, although no man had more reason to exult in his success than our triumph-

ant hero, yet from the want of "that something unpossessed," he still bore about him marks of secret disappointment, and was frequently heard to sigh, and say—

"Hæret lateri lethalis arundo."

On one of these occasions Lord Orville alluded to the subject, and confessed that he also felt much secret anxiety relative to Lord Carisbrook and his daughter; for it was most strange that eight weeks had now elapsed since he had received a single line from either of them. "The last letter," he added, "was dated Naples, and they proposed sailing on the next day for Malta."

"How!" exclaimed Vivid: "and have you had no communication since?"

"None," replied his lordship.

"What! not any account of their having safely reached Malta?"

"No; or if they have reached it, I cannot now receive any news till the arrival of the packet, which, however, fortunately is daily expected."

"And which, I presume," continued Vivid, "will bring the latest intelligence."

"Even so."

"Come, then, my lord; have you any objection to our hastening to the pier, and there making inquiry?"

"Why, if you wish it, Vivid; but you are aware the

packet never touches here or at Portsmouth unless by special order of the government."

"And in this instance such may have been the case. Come, this strange, this unaccustomed silence must have been caused by circumstances most untoward. I fear the worst, and 'will run into the danger to avoid the apprehension.' Come, come, my lor'."

Of course his lordship good-humouredly complied; and having speedily reached the pier, every sailor on the look-out was interrogated as to whether they could communicate any intelligence relative to the packet from Malta; but, as Lord Orville anticipated, each of them answered in the negative, and Vivid left the pier in the same state of darkness and suspense as when he first went upon it.

On that day he dined alone with his father; and after each of them had vainly endeavoured to find a satisfactory excuse for Lord Carisbrook's long silence, Vivid becoming more and more wild with anxiety and alarm, sent Sam Alltaet to try whether he could procure any information. Sam, though aware it was a hopeless errand, hurried to the pier; and, what appeared most extraordinary and astonishing to his master, he almost immediately hurried back again. Entering the room pale, trembling, and nearly breathless with agitation, he stammered out—

"They are arrived!"

"Who?—not Lord Carisbrook and Lady Henrietta!" exclaimed both son and father.

. “ Ay, but they are!” replied Alstadt. “ I saw them get out of the boat, ascend the pier, and they and their whole *suite* being in deep mourning—”

“ Mourning?” interrupted Vivid.

“ Ay, sir; and, like you, fearing some dreadful event had occurred, I most anxiously asked my old friend the valet to explain the melancholy cause, when what do you think, sir, was his answer?”

“ What?”

“ ‘ The cause,’ he said, ‘ is poor Captain Morden’s death.’ ”

“ Dead!—brave, generous Morden dead?”

“ Heavens!” rejoined Dr. Vivid, “ where, when did this afflicting, dread event take place?”

“ At Malta, sir, and before the arrival of his long-expected bride and her father.”

“ How?” continued Vivid:—“ they saw him not?—they afforded him no deathbed consolation?”

“ No, sir: alas! they merely arrived in time to witness his funeral; but the delay was no fault of theirs.”

“ Oh no! on that I’ll risk my life.”

At this critical and distressing junature our hero’s situation became peculiarly embarrassed and entangled. Considering himself still bound in honour to fulfil his promise of not seeking or pursuing Lady Henrietta, yet wishing, by sharing, to alleviate her present sufferings, how was he to proceed? His common sense soon informed him that there was no alternative

but to wait patiently till the morning, when he had every reason to hope that he should either see or hear from Lord Orville. In this hope he was not disappointed; for soon after breakfast his lordship called upon him, and, having answered most of his inquiries, he delivered to him, by Lady Morden's desire, her deceased husband's watch and seals. This circumstance, as may be imagined, extremely affected him; but when he was informed it was a bequest, and of the expressions which accompanied such bequest—"To one of the most honourable and disinterested of human beings—to Henry Vivid;" and also when he heard that these were the captain's last words, he turned aside and burst into a flood of tears. Lord Orville tried to compose him, and, amongst other cheering information, stated, that the captain of the packet having received, on his arrival off Falmouth, several newspapers, Lady Morden and her father were already in full possession of all Vivid's literary and parliamentary success, and on which they both requested Lord Orville most sincerely to congratulate him.

On the third day after their return to Carisbrook House they beheld the arrival of the "Protector," with all its mournful insignia, in consequence of the body of Captain Morden being on board. By direction of his executrix it was speedily brought on shore; and such high honours and funeral rites as his valour and virtues deserved having been ordered to be duly performed, his remains were carried to the vault of the

Carisbrooks, followed by his lordship, several other naval officers, Lord Orville, many noble members of the yacht club, and lastly by Vivid, who acted as chief mourner, and who, recollecting the deceased's last words, felt "that within which passeth show;" but at the same time felt, as he confessed, more proud of such genuine heartfelt praise from such a man as Captain Morden, than of all the rank and honours which fortune and a giddy world had lately lavished on him.—"Mortalitate reicta vivit immortalitate indutus."

The reader may remember, that in the event of Captain Morden's death, Lord Carisbrook had resolved to select for his daughter's husband *another* naval officer—and in this idea he persisted: till owing to the urgent entreaties, not only of Lady Henrietta, but of his cousin, he consented to a sort of half-drawn battle, i. e. he allowed her to live single during his life; for though he much respected Vivid, yet he declared he never could agree to a union between the heiress of the house of Carisbrook and the son of a country doctor. Such, however, is the magic power of success—and particularly of such stcrling success as our hero's, that foreseeing, if he did not become prime minister, he would sooner or later be created a peer, his lordship, without communicating with any one of his family, drove to Dr. Vivid's, and brought away both father and son.

On his return to Carisbrook-house, entering the li-

brary, where Lady Henrietta was sitting with Lady Orville, he exclaimed—

“Well, my dear, my darling girl, I do not know whether you will say I have done right or wrong, but I have brought an old acquaintance home with me; ay, and what is more, I mean Carisbrook-house shall be his home for ever.”

Without further comment he introduced our hero, who appeared as much confused and agitated as the lovely object of his admiration. She remained utterly incapable of describing her feelings; but he soon summoned sufficient resolution, first to express his heartfelt gratitude to his noble benefactor, and next to throw himself at the feet of his adored and destined bride.

From this moment, for *once*, “the course of true love did run smooth”—every hour brought with it new sources of joy and triumph. At the end of ten months, the envied, the renowned, the happy Vivid, accepted one of the highest and most responsible offices in the government; and soon after he led to the altar that sole object of his earliest, latest love—Lady Henrietta. On this solemn occasion, our eccentric nautical peer, in the joy of the moment, could not resist taking his dramatic son-in-law aside, and congratulating him on having married an entirely *new character*—namely, “a maiden widow.”

With regard to the rest of our *dramatis personæ*, Sir Peter Pamper died of *traicium vitae* at Paris, and his

mother, far from being heart-broken on the occasion, retired to her seat in the Isle of Wight. As to Sir Henry and Lady Reesley, they remained at Naples; and the latter, having given birth to a little riotous heir-at-law, could not quite so much indulge in *still life* as usual.

Blase Broyzely, no longer able to carry on the war, sounded a retreat, and, "gra'mercy," took the benefit of the insolvent act; when, in his examinations, it appeared few men had led more *active* and *industrious* lives, for in the course of four years he had contrived to run in debt twenty-four thousand pounds. As to Sir Juniper, he went on in the same way—in short, he "*still* lived, and was *still* Sir Juniper."

Dr. Vivid left off practice, and became an inmate at Carisbrook-house; whilst Sam Allact, our hero's companion in weal and in woe—how—how were his services to be rewarded? He was requested to name his wish—this he declined; but as it was evident "the ruling passion" was still theatrical, and a large circuit of country theatres was at that time to be let, his master at once proposed his taking them, offering to become his security, and advance any sum that was necessary to give *clat* to the opening. In Sam's opinion, being manager of five theatres was so much better than being sovereign of as many kingdoms; that finding he could not contain his joy, he left the room, and shed "the first *gentlemanly* tears" of his life.

THE CONCLUSION.

Here, then, we conclude; trusting, that, if "A PLAYWRIGHT'S ADVENTURES" have been crowned with success on the *stage*, they will not altogether prove "caviare to the million" in the perusal; and intending, kind friends, that we shall meet again next year, allow me, in the mean time, once more to say with Terence,

"VALETE AC IAGAUDITE!"



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